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JUBILEE MANIFESTO

IN preparation for the 1950 Golden Jubilee of the Labour Party and the hoped-for renewal of an electoral mandate in that year, the National Executive has issued for consideration by the Party's Whitsun Conference a policy statement in the true line of gradualist British Social-Democracy. Fabian, reasonable and seductive, *Labour Believes in Britain* urges, indeed, that the British people should "seek freedom from the enslaving material bonds of capitalism." But, though the welfare State is to be the substitute, material security is to be regarded as a means, not an end: the final goal is the evolution of "a people more kindly, intelligent, co-operative, enterprising and rich in culture." An informed democracy, in which "all the finer constructive impulses of man" are released, is to co-operate with a State in which there is no room for alien conceptions of class war. The underlying philosophy is that of the later John Stuart Mill, not Karl Marx.

This profession of Social-Democratic faith begins with the assertion of four basic principles —that equality of opportunity must be established and extremes of wealth and poverty abolished; that a privileged minority of owners must not be allowed to dictate the economic destinies of the people; that unemployment, inherent in the inefficiency of capitalism, must be eliminated; and that human dignity and individual freedom must be enhanced by creating in industry, no less than in the legislature, a "flourishing and sensible democracy." From these premises the positive proposals in the programme follow logically. Full employment is to be ensured by planned application of the Keynesian technique—with a hint that "reflation," if necessary, might be achieved by the enactment of equal pay for equal work by women. Provided that there is a proportionate increase in productivity, the social services are to be improved. The achievement of the present Parliament in this direction will be rounded off by nationalising the industrial assurance companies. Monopolistic tendencies are to be countered by taking under public control the cement and sugar industries; and appropriate sections of the key chemical industry will be nationalised if concerns such as I.C.I. run counter to the national interest. To agriculturists, encouragement and assistance are promised, including the assumption by the State of complete responsibility for water supply. The consumer is to have a square deal —guaranteed, if necessary, by municipal or other public ownership of wholesale markets and by the development of Consumers' Councils. Simultaneously, in this transitional stage towards Socialism, private enterprise is to be stimulated and its "fruitful partnership with the State" continued. Competitive public enterprise may be required to promote efficiency, but "there is no reason for always socialising whole industries." Subject to an overall plan, from which vexatious detailed controls are to be eliminated as far as possible, the "merchant adventurer" of whom Mr. Harold Wilson spoke with such admiration in Parliament on Monday, is promised technical and financial assistance from the State.

The programme, in fact, falls under three main headings—consolidation and tidying up (nationalisation of industrial assurance and water); the protection of the community against monopolistic exploitation (nationalisation of sugar and cement); and the promise that the State will make efficiency its aim, both in the administration of publicly owned industries and in extending the range of public ownership if capitalism—for instance, in shipbuilding—fails, in spite of the State's paternal assistance, to deliver the goods.

From the Social-Democratic standpoint this is a workmanlike document which should serve the Labour Party well as a basis for its election campaign. It has its weaknesses and omissions. There is no reference to the very probable necessity for a capital levy during the life of the next Parliament; and the Executive appears to ignore the difficulty of reconciling "equal opportunity" with the system of privileged education that has in fact survived recent educational reform. Above all, the section of the document dealing with industrial democracy is singularly complacent. To say that "patient effort" is required to make the system of joint consultation work, and that the unions must do more to educate their members, is hardly an inspiriting message to the miners and railwaymen who complain, with some justice, that the Labour Government has packed the administrations of publicly owned industries with anti-Socialists who have no understanding of working-class aspirations. As a sensible, coherent statement, however, of its leadership's general intention, *Labour Believes in Britain* should go down well both at Blackpool and generally in the Labour movement. The picture presented is that of steady progress towards a Scandinavian type of Social-Democracy; and that is probably what most people in this country want.

Yet the fact must be faced that the whole programme rests on the supposition of gradual and ordered progress towards a fully planned economy over at least a generation to come, and that, as the Budget's huge armaments bill has illustrated, policy thus formulated is terribly vulnerable to external pressures from the field of foreign affairs. Is a mixed economy, 20 per cent. Socialist and 80 per cent. "free enterprise," in which the consumer is to be protected, the capitalist encouraged, the cost of welfare financed by taxation and classless co-operative effort secured, an economic political or psychological possibility? Perhaps. But only on the assumption that we are not also seeking to maintain colossal armaments—which, in terms of 1949, means that the West must reach an accommodation with the U.S.S.R

Labour Defeat in County Councils

The most striking fact about the County Council elections is that Tory successes were achieved despite a fairly general increase in the Socialist vote. Apart from the West Riding, Labour held its own in the traditional coal-mining counties. Elsewhere, somewhat disconcertingly, it lost in industrial areas while making some small gains in agricultural districts. In Wiltshire, for instance, the losses were in Swindon and the gains outside. By and large, however, last week's results are a repetition of those recorded in the municipal elections of November, 1947. The total vote increased; and of these new voters the vast majority were Conservative. This increase in the anti-Socialist vote is, of course, due to the entry of the Conservative Party into local politics which took place after the sweeping Labour victories in the autumn of 1945. Labour victories achieved with a 25 per cent. poll have now been reversed with a 40 per cent. poll, or even more, after a campaign fought by Lord Woolton almost exclusively on national issues. The new Conservative tactic makes it very difficult to draw any conclusions about national trends. In the L.C.C., where a few hundred votes in Fulham decided the issue, it looks as though the shock of the Budget on the eve of poll was the last straw which broke the Labour majority. But even in London a detailed analysis of the figures shows that the chief cause of Labour's defeat was the failure of Labour's Parliamentary voters to take part in a local election. This accounts for the contrast between the Government's by-election successes and its defeat in last week's election. The conclusion for Transport House is obvious enough. Faced by a brand-new Conservative organisation, it has got to build up a machine capable of polling the full Labour vote whenever the need arises. The days are gone when Labour could win local elections by mustering a small, compact vote and relying on the apathy of the Tories. Today the boot is on the other foot; it is Labour apathy which is the basis of Lord Woolton's triumph.

The West and Germany

The Foreign Ministers claim that the Washington Conference has resulted in complete agreement on all the basic principles governing the future exercise of tripartite control over Western Germany. How far this unanimity will, in fact, be maintained may be open to question; and, until full details have been published of the agreements on dismantling, the prohibition or restriction of defined industries, and particularly the procedure determining future decisions by the High Commissioners, it is difficult to judge how far the special requirements of France in the matter of security are being met. According to M. Schuman, the French High Commissioner is to have a right of veto on matters of security, the occupation forces, reparations and demilitarisation; but it is not clear whether this is to amount to more than a power of delay. That is, if there is disagreement among the High Commissioners on any of these subjects, there is apparently to be an appeal to the three Governments; but whether, on the governmental level, France can continue to exercise a right of veto is obscure. Meanwhile, the German Parliamentary Council at Bonn has at least been presented with an agreed Occupation Statute whose design is to give the German people "self-governmen to the maximum possible degree." The "reserved" subjects which limit full German sovereignty are extensive: they range from foreign affairs and disarmament to external trade, decartelisation and scientific research; moreover, any amendment of the basic law and the *Land* constitutions will require the express approval of the Occupying Powers. It is emphasised, however, that both the Federal Government and the *Länder* Governments are expected to legislate and act even in the "reserved" field subject to the High Commissioners' veto. In other words, the intention evidently is to replace direct interference of Military Government in Germany's affairs by a negative control, subject to which very great authority will be transferred to the Government of Western Germany when it comes into being. At the moment the birth of a Constitution seems likely to be considerably delayed by the decision of the Social-Democrats to disavow the existing draft and to start afresh.

Greece and Her Neighbours

While economic and administrative confusion in Royalist Greece is being increased by a Civil Service strike which threatens to spread to the railway and other unions, the Greek Partisans have reconcentrated effectively and, in a successful attack, have recovered most of the Grammos *massif* which the Royalists captured at heavy expense last year. Coinciding with the visit of the Albanian Premier to Moscow, the Partisan offensive which, according to Athens, has received some Albanian support, has led to wild stories of a Bulgar-Albanian plan to acquire a land corridor across Northern Greece in pursuance of an anti-Yugoslav scheme for the creation of a Great Macedonia. As Alexander Werth, however, observes in a dispatch on a later page, this would be a dangerous game for the Cominform to play. At the National Front Congress in Belgrade this week, Mr. Kolishevsky, the Premier of Yugoslav Macedonia, has reaffirmed his loyalty to Marshal Tito; and, though there is no reason to suppose that Mr. Dimitrov has abandoned his conception of an ultimate Balkan Federation, there is not a shred of evidence that Bulgaria is inclined to become embroiled in hostilities with Yugoslavia.

Italy's Colonies

Allied unanimity on Germany has definitely not been parallelled by a common policy in respect of the Italian Colonies. This week's discussions of their future in the Political Committee of the United Nations have revealed differences on which the Italian press of all parties is commenting bitterly, and out of which Mr. Gromyko has been quick to make political capital. The British proposals are that Cyrenaica should be placed under British Mandate (extended temporarily to Tripolitania), that the eastern part of Eritrea should be ceded to Abyssinia, and that Italian Somaliland should be placed under Uno trusteeship, with Italy as the administering authority. These proposals were supported in the main by Mr. Foster Dulles for the U.S.A.; he was inclined, however, to be evasive about the partition of Eritrea, and he did not expressly endorse the extension to Tripolitania of the British Mandate in Cyrenaica. The French delegate having then expressed the view that, with the exception of Eritrea, all the Italian Colonies should be returned to Italy under a Uno trusteeship, Mr. Gromyko proceeded to denounce the Anglo-American attempt to acquire a strategic base in Libya. Unlike the French, he no longer took the view, which the U.S.S.R. once held, that all her former Colonies should be restored to Italy. By an ingenious tactical manœuvre he revived, in his own name, the proposal made by the U.S.A. in September, 1945—that all the Italian Colonies should be placed under direct Uno trusteeship, with a guarantee that Libya should acquire independence within ten years. Mr. Dulles was placed in the somewhat embarrassing position of having to explain, at a press conference, that things had changed since 1945, when there was no Iron Curtain or Marshall Aid, and no Truman Fourth Point for backward areas. The United States now felt that "political stability" in Africa had become indispensable; moreover, the Trusteeship Council was no longer a harmonious body capable of administering territories effectively. How far these arguments will appeal to the Arab delegations remains to be seen.

The Cost of American Policy

This is the appropriation season in Washington, when Congress counts its pennies for the work in hand. The Senate, mulling over the second instalment of Marshall Aid, accepted it with much less fuss than the first, though the habitual penny-pinchers, such as Mr. Taft and the diehards who dislike "subsidising Socialist wigs," were courteously allowed their say. None of the amendments offered a really serious challenge and, when the moment comes for the Senate to vote the money required—purchases at present are being financed by a short-term loan from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation—further delay is unlikely. Final approval, however, must wait for the House, which may well try to pare down the cost of European recovery. The bogy of deficit financing has already begun to haunt the lobbies of the Capitol. For Congress will soon be asked both to supply funds for military supplies to the Atlantic Powers and to make provision for increased spending on America's own military establishment. The House Appropriations Committee has already recommended a military budget of £3,317 million—almost £300 million more than for the present financial year. In all, European Aid, the Atlantic Pact and rearmament will throw a considerable strain upon the U.S. Treasury in the coming year. While Congress may be unwilling, under present tense conditions, to make any substantial cuts in arms appropriations, it may listen to the charges of waste and inefficiency levelled against the three Services by ex-President Hoover's inquiry commission and press for greater unification and more "cost-consciousness."

Hungary Steps Up the Pace

The Hungarian Government, which has lagged somewhat behind its neighbours, has now set about catching up its arrears, politically and economically. It has accepted the request of the Independence Front for early elections and, after the forthcoming dissolution of Parliament, will present a single list at the poll which will be held in the middle of May. The parties within the Front will receive a quota of seats, more than half going to the Workers' Party, formed by fusion of the Communists and Social-Democrats; the remainder will be split among the Smallholders, National Peasants, Radicals and Independent Democrats. The new Parliament, thus selected, will have the task of drafting a new constitution permitting, in Mr. Rakosi's words, the country to "be developed into a People's Republic." Much time must be spent between now and the end of the year in preparation for the commencement of the Five Year Plan, which is designed to accelerate the tempo of industrialisation. By the end of 1954, if the Plan is carried out successfully, Hungarian industry should be producing more than twice as much as before the war. Much of the new investment will go into capital goods especially in mining, textiles and electrical equipment. While some further expansion of agricul

tural production is planned, the goal here is not so ambitious. Clearly, success in this field depends upon the outcome of the present campaign against the kulaks. Unless the class struggle within the villages can be kept under control—and here the Hungarians may profit from the Soviet experience—political difficulties and adverse weather could together disrupt the agricultural plan. But, overall, the increase in pace reflects the desire to bring Hungary into step with the march of all the East European nations.

The Dock Strike

The lightning strike called by dockers in the Port of London is yet another illustration of the failure of the machinery for joint consultation in industry. It has been an open secret for some time that the National Dock Labour Board was engaged in reviewing its registers, with a view to adjusting, where necessary, the numbers eligible, under the decasualisation plan, for guaranteed employment. The Board claims that the 32 men declared redundant in London were "ineffective"—that is, that their attendances and work were unsatisfactory. The strikers' retort is that the men singled out for dismissal were men suffering from industrial injuries or old age; and they complain that no pension scheme for redundants has yet been worked out. Though it may be questioned whether it was worth while risking a strike in the Port of London in order to save payment of guaranteed wages to 32 out of 27,000 men, there can be no gainsaying the principle that maintenance of guaranteed weekly pay, "work or no work," is incompatible with carrying indefinitely in the docks a labour force disproportionate to actual need. Little attempt, however, seems to have been made to "sell" this to the rank and file, with whom the leaders of the T. and G.W.U. appear to be as out of touch as they were during the stoppage last summer.

The Division of the Cake

The most remarkable figure in this year's Budget White Paper is that which shows net saving by individuals, as distinct from reserved company profits, at a mere £6 million, as against £165 million in 1947 and £678 million in 1946. Part of the fall is no doubt accounted for by the Special Contribution, which was a non-recurrent tax on private capital; but, even allowing for this factor, there has been a very sharp fall, which is largely the result, no doubt, of deferred spending on house repairs and decorations and the renewal of other more or less durable consumers' goods. This means that, as matters now stand, capital accumulation depends hardly at all on individual savings, and comes almost entirely either from company reserves or from public capital expenditure. In all, gross capital formation amounted to £2,352 million—more than £300 million above last year's figure—so that the fall in personal savings has not meant any decline in capital formation as a whole. The White Paper also attempts to break up the items of income more than in previous years. Wages accounted in 1948 for 44 per cent. of personal incomes, as against 42 per cent. in 1947 and 37 per cent, in 1938. Salaries were 21 per cent.—the same as last year, but less than the 24 per cent. of 1938, largely because of reduced employment in the distributive trades. Rent, profits and interest were 32 per cent., as against 33 per cent. last year and 37 per cent. in 1938. Farmers' incomes are put at £248 million, as against £60 million in 1938—a sensational advance, which suggests that agricultural subsidies may need review. Unfortunately, profits and interest are still linked together in the statistics.

PARLIAMENT: Money, Money, Money

Tuesday

THE House listened wakefully through the Chancellor's Budget lecture. Not even the emphatic cadence at the end of each sentence could induce sleep among Members who, like children at a long party, waited expectantly to the very end for the distribution of prizes. When Cripps said, "I turn now to the changes in taxation which I propose," the House jerked to attention, and a few Socialists, sitting beyond the Bar with their backs to Cripps, turned to kneel as though in prayer.

Traditionally, Chancellors throw off a few minor changes at the beginning of their statement. The pleasure of anticipating great reliefs (and how confident each Member was of tax reductions in the pearl-pink haze of pre-Budget reveries!) is teased and excited by trivial alterations. Cripps at an early point announced that the licence duties of hawkers, moneylenders and pawnbrokers would be transferred to local authorities. Members smiled benevolently. The Chancellor's little joke. Socialists nudged each other in the ribs. But by the time Cripps had finished talking about changes, there were dry lips and haunted eyes on the Labour benches. Ribs became sore as the nudges changed to digs. And, among the Tories, expressions changed from blankness to wonderment, and from wonderment to the benevolence which they reserve for Labour Members who, they think, are denying the doctrine of their own party.

After that, a cortège of Socialists, taking the Chancellor's peroration as read, moved mourning into the Lobbies. Where was the confidence of yesterday, asked some. And O for the touch of a vanished hand, said others, looking wistfully over their shoulders at the Right Honourable Gentleman, the Member for Bishop Auckland. But the Tories, who had come almost in tears, went rejoicing, and are still laughing.

The Debate, after Cripps had spoken, became a triple fugue. There was the back-bench explosion of anger, partly based on the merits of the case, and partly derived from frustrated hopes. Mark Hewitson's speech was the outburst of one who, unable to contradict the accountancy of the balance sheet, yet has the firm belief that there is something wrong in the stock-figure and the wages total. His last words were "Or else—!"

Then there were the Tories like John Anderson, who came hurrying forward to congratulate Cripps on having been, at last, persuaded of their view. And the third strand of the debate was represented in the speeches of Silverman, Mitchison and Bruce. They established the view, which after the first disappointments was more and more widely held among Labour supporters, that this Budget, far from being an attack on Labour's standards, was in fact the means by which social benefits were being defended against Tory attack. But it was not until the Government had had the advantage of a speech by Hinchingbrooke that the Party really rallied.

On the third day of the Debate, it seemed that the mood of the Parliamentary Labour Party would stabilise itself somewhere to the left of Cripps. George Wigg's speech was an immediate echo of feeling in the constituencies. The Chancellor had produced an orthodox equation of revenue and expenditure. Were the sources of collection and the form of distribution those that are expected of a Socialist Chancellor? Many in the Party said "No!" Nor was there general satisfaction with the Chancellor's magisterial references to the possibility of future special contributions for the Health Service. It had the same psychological effect as his last year's tobacco tax—just to remind smokers that he was still watching their consumption.

Yet there is no pleasing some people. And the Chancellor, too much to the Right for many in his own Party, was too far to the Left for Nigel Birch. Apart from its political rancour, Birch's speech, with its warning of foreign competition and its reminder against administrative extravagance, was important for a Chancellor who on exports and administration speaks *ex cathedra*, and seems impatient of advice offered to him by anyone except officials. None the less, Birch's ending of his speech and the day's debate—"The stars are setting, and the Caravan starts for the Dawn of Nothing—Oh, make haste!" was unduly pessimistic. The Chancellor knows exactly where he is going. His only problem is to take the Party with him. MAURICE EDELMAN

SIR STAFFORD AND HIS CRITICS

THE Budget has provided yet another occasion for the meeting of extremes. In jubilant concord, the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Worker* celebrate the suicide of Social-Democracy and the self-confessed bankruptcy of the welfare State. Even the *Manchester Guardian* joins in the chorus with an "I told you so! Social Security is after all impossible without dearer food." To add to the confusion, a section of the Parliamentary Party—for the most part consisting of loyalists who bitterly resented attacks on Mr. Bevin's foreign policy—threatens rebellion against the Budget, which it condemns as anti-working-class.

In the hub-bub it is well to look calmly at the situation with which the Chancellor had to deal. Undoubtedly he was gravely embarrassed by the atmosphere created during the last three months. The Government had warmed our hearts by a series of announcements about our success in bridging the export gap; clothes rationing had been abolished, as sweet rationing will be within the next fortnight, and finally there had been that minor but psychologically important relaxation of austerity—the resumption of street lighting. A people which, through the acceptance of extreme austerity, had achieved an astonishing come-back from the collapse of July 1947, was led to believe that the Budget would contain concessions. Nothing in the *Economic Survey* or in Government speeches gave countenance to this optimism. But it was undoubtedly fostered by Mr. Maurice Webb's advocacy of tax reliefs in the columns of the *News of the World* and the *News Chronicle*. If the Chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party thought that we could let up on austerity, surely, it was asked, Sir Stafford Cripps would be bound to relent?

There is little doubt that the shock which the public received last Wednesday was largely due to this pre-Budget build up. Most people would have accepted another twelve months of austerity with resignation if they had not been induced to hope for something more pleasant. And now the shock is being exploited to suggest that the Budget is a grave departure from previous Government policy, a tacit admission that Tory criticism of Socialist finance was right after all and that social security must always cost the working man more than it is worth.

The truth is very different. If the Chancellor had had £300 million of surplus revenue, this could have been the most popular Budget in history. Social security costs could have been covered and simultaneously generous concessions been made to the housewife and the smoker, as well as to the beer-drinker. This is not a Utopian vision. Indeed it would have happened last week had it not been for one thing—the rising cost of defence. It was not the price of the health service, but the decision to make jet bombers and battleships which made austerity inevitable.

In these columns we have predicted frequently that even the present scale of rearmament would depress living standards. In this Budget the prediction is fulfilled. We cannot spend £750 million on guns without reducing the supply of butter. Labour loyalists who a few weeks ago voted for the defence estimates cannot logically rebel when the Chancellor asks them to foot the bill. Captain Hewitson's furious attack on the,

Government last Thursday was somewhat tardy. Instead of waiting for the Budget, he should have put down a vote of censure on Mr. Alexander.

Some of the critics accept this, but complain that Sir Stafford might have shown more tact and psychological insight: the pill could have been coloured differently. Such arguments are largely self-deception. It is true that a reduction in beer prices, combined with an increase in food costs, has confused and exasperated the man in the street. He can hardly be expected to understand that the penny was taken off beer largely because revenue was sinking, or that this concession was not made "at the expense of the housewife." The unpopular decision to freeze food subsidies at £465 million was made from quite separate policy considerations. The Chancellor might have foreseen this reaction in the country. While keeping the price of beer unchanged, he might have cut purchase tax on essentials. But these are really minor matters of "showmanship" which do not affect the main issue. The British people cannot be fooled by fiscal pirouettes into believing that an austerity meal is really a feast. It is an insult to the underpaid railway or textile worker to plead, as Captain Hewitson did, that he could be bribed into foregoing a wage increase if Sir Stafford would dish him out "a little bit of something from under the counter." Budgetary window-dressing cannot affect the legitimacy of wage claims. Does anyone for instance seriously pretend that some slight remissions of purchase tax would have persuaded Mr. Figgins to withdraw his demand for a 12*s.* 6*d.* increase in the basic wage rate payable to the railwaymen?

Captain Hewitson's outburst, however, did reflect the views of many of his colleagues on the T.U.C. The wage freeze cannot be maintained for another year; and, if increases are general throughout industry, they will force up prices and jeopardise our exports which are already meeting buyers' resistance. The danger is obvious enough.

The responsibility, however, for meeting it lies not with the Chancellor but with the T.U.C. There are scores of categories of workers whose basic rates do not exceed £5 a week. They need wage increases and they would have needed them, in terms of social justice, even if rearmament had not prevented budgetary concessions. The trouble is that, in the hierarchical structure of British industry, concessions to the grossly underpaid nearly always produce concessions to those next above them and so on to the top of industry. In the past, it has been impossible to improve the lot of the depressed worker in relation to his better paid colleagues because his pittance wages were a sign of their superior status.

If the wage demands, which undoubtedly will be made this summer, are not to lead straight to inflation, the Trade Union leaders will have to display real statesmanship and begin to develop a wages policy for industry as a whole. This means discriminating between wage claims according to need, even if this violates the traditional scale of status between one worker and another. Sooner or later this task had to be faced by the T.U.C. It has been made desperately urgent by this year's Budget.

AMERICAN LABOUR IN POLITICS

[*This is the second of a series of articles by Mr. R. H. S. Crossman, M.P.*]

Who elected Harry Truman? The Unions claim that they were the decisive factor; but statistically as good a case can be made out for the Mid-Western corn farmers, and an even better one for the Negroes. The question, however, is now really academic. Labour might have won the election for Truman if it had remained true to the Gompers formula and traded its votes to the highest bidder; equally, it might have failed to elect the man it desired, even after it became politically conscious. What matters is not the vote of last November, but the fact that Labour is at last providing the mass basis for political action which American Liberalism has always lacked.

This, indeed, is the most vivid impression which I received from my visits to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago. Within two or three days one had got to know a group of Trade Union leaders and middle-class liberals with whom a British Socialist could feel completely at home. A few years ago American Liberalism—outside one or two States—consisted of a number of small and often frustrated groups, "do-gooders" in civic politics, or supporters of special causes like Republican Spain or Civil Rights. The New Deal was really a Federal affair, directed from Washington, with few roots in local life. It was no doubt this lack of an indigenous mass movement which drove so many American liberals into membership of the Communist Party, or at least spiritual reliance on Russia. All this has changed. Now, A.D.A.—Americans for Democratic Action—the Fair Deal organisation whose National Convention took place last week, can bring middle-class liberals into constructive co-operation with the Unions. In Cleveland I heard a liberal, from the local University, say, "We really can't discuss social security until we've dealt with Ernest Bevin." But he was impatiently dismissed as an "intellectual"; and I was delighted to find that the relevance of our Socialist experiment to an American planned economy can at last be analysed without first settling the subject of Palestine.

In this momentous change, the Communist purge has played an important and, in many respects, a positive part. Outside New York and Washington—and, to a lesser extent, Chicago—I did not find an atmosphere of "witch-hunting." Elsewhere, particularly in the C.I.O., the purge has been a pungent form of political education. The Unions tolerated Communist leadership precisely because they did not take politics seriously; indeed, it was John L. Lewis, the leading exponent of political non-partisanship, who originally brought the Communists into the organisation of the C.I.O. But as soon as the Unions were forced into politics, they had to work out a really American approach; and this meant—in a period of American-Soviet friction—breaking with the C.P. The ferocious struggle that ensued provided excellent political training, and forced the Right wing to find the answers to Communist polemics. Inevitably, the battle took place exclusively in terms of foreign policy, with the result that, since "Left" and "Communist" are now synonymous terms, the Labour Movement lacks a well-defined non-Communist Left with a militant domestic policy. Since the Fair Deal is little more than an election slogan, this is a serious gap. A.D.A. will have to fill it by making itself the Fabian Society of American Labour.

Particularly in northern cities, which have large Irish, Italian and Polish populations, the Catholic Church, operating through A.C.T.U.—the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists—played a prominent part in the defeat of the Communists. I expected to find that its influence had been reactionary. To some extent this was true of foreign policy. During my visit there was a very healthy reaction by non-Catholics against the ballyhoo about Cardinal Mindszenty. The Methodist Churches in particular suspected that American foreign policy was being manipulated for Papist ends. But in domestic affairs, as far as I could see, the Catholic influence inside the Unions has been socially progressive. In all the cities I visited, Catholic Fathers, more often than not Jesuits, are closely associated with the Unions, and taking the lead on such radical issues as race. Sometimes the hierarchy supports them, and sometimes it obviously disapproves. These Labour priests, as I learnt for myself, are outstanding men; and I could find no Union leader who, even in the closest privacy, would deny that their Catholicism is a genuinely progressive force, particularly in the sphere of workers' education.

Political activity in the C.I.O. is handled by the Political Action Committee; in the A.F. of L., by the Labour League. In each city I found that the organisations and personalities ran true to type. In the A.F. of L. offices, a British Socialist feels at home. Here is the musty craft atmosphere of our own Trade Union bureaucracy; here are the assertively working-class types, who suspect intellectuals and distrust economic theory. The A.F. of L. has been in politics for 50 years. It has adapted itself to its environment, come to terms with the political machines, and is confident that the C.I.O. will do the same when it shakes down. Over the way, at the Political Action Committee, the atmosphere is different; up-to-date office equipment, research staff with University degrees, and discussion thick with statistics and ambitious plans. Everywhere I went, the P.A.C. was the political leader, and the Labour League of the A.F. of L. a reluctant, rather sceptical second string. There are exceptions, of course. Dubinsky, sitting at what was once Henry Ford's desk in Henry Ford's offices in New York (now purchased by his Ladies Garment Workers), and telling Philadelphia industrialists how to increase productivity, seems to belong in the C.I.O.; just as one sometimes feels that Philip Murray's solidly-organised Steelworkers might be more at home in the A.F. of L. But generally the pattern holds. The local leaders of the A.F. of L. tend to identify politics with the pay-roll. In Chicago they officially supported Mr. Green, the notoriously corrupt Republican Governor, last November, because most of them were personally in his debt. When the C.I.O. endorsed Adlai Stevenson, however, the membership revolted, and Stevenson won Illinois for the Democrats. In Cleveland I found a similar situation. The A.F. of L. leadership backed a machine politician against Governor Lausche—and lost.

There can be no question of blaming the A.F. of L. The C.I.O. was fortunate in the time of its birth. A child of the depression, it has no *laissez-faire* tradition to throw off. It knows that it was nursed through infancy by a benevolent Democratic President and that, outside the New Deal nursery, it would never have grown to maturity. Politics are in its bones, and the Fair Deal appears to it not as a plank in a politician's platform, but as a necessity of existence. The Taft-Hartley Act drove a reluctant A.F. of L., including half a dozen traditionally Republican Unions, into last-minute door-knocking for Democratic candidates. For the C.I.O., Taft-Hartley was an extra incentive to the type of political activity which Hillman had begun in 1940.

Everyone with whom I got down to discussing details agreed that last November the Unions did much too little much too late. By a last

minute effort they knocked out certain well-known reactionaries; but in the primaries, where the candidates are elected by registered Party members, and in the formulation of policy at the Democratic Convention, their influence was negligible. In fact, until the autumn of 1948, they did not trouble to go into politics, because they thought that Truman had no chance.

To-day, they are paying the price for this negligence. In Pittsburgh I was told by the chief P.A.C. organiser that he had virtually written-off the Eighty-First Congress, and in other cities I heard the same story. So the P.A.C.—and, to a lesser extent, the Labour League—is now at work throughout the industrial North preparing for the mid-term elections in 1950. They hope to increase the chances of the Fair Deal by defeating another batch of reactionaries—first and foremost Senator Taft in Ohio—and increasing the number of New Liberals in both Houses. The first task is to persuade Union members to register as electors. In the U.S.A.—for reasons I shall discuss next week—voting is not made easy. The elector must himself go down to the City Hall and place his name on the electoral roll. The rules vary. In some States it must be done annually; in others, after any election when one has failed to vote; while in Georgia, an elector must be ready to answer twenty questions about the Constitution, a device intended to keep the Negroes off the register, which has actually resulted in a heart-warming campaign of political education. When one recalls that last November only 50 per cent. of the adult population voted, it is easy to realise why registration is the most important political activity of the Labour Movement.

The second task is to break down the lists of union members according to their home addresses, and then build a political organisation in the wards and precincts, which can either co-operate with or challenge the Party machines. This work was being started in every city I visited. In Chicago, the C.I.O. was taking a step further. There, Trade Unionists were being trained in "community work"—that is, in those jobs of "personal service to the deserving poor" which give the city machines their main hold on the electorate.

How is this new political organisation to be used? I took part in many discussions on this subject. I choose the example of Detroit, not because it is typical—Detroit possesses probably the most politically-conscious Labour Movement in America—but because it reveals the problem most clearly. With over 600,000 members, Walter Reuther's United Automobile Workers dominate the city, and indeed the State of Michigan. They elected the new Governor—the rich young liberal, "Soapy" Williams—and they have already permeated the weak Democratic machine in some Congressional Districts. There is little doubt that the U.A.W. could take over that machine and dictate its policy as well as its candidates; it could also capture the City Hall. Only control of the State legislature is barred by the jerrymandering which, in almost every State, gives the agricultural counties a permanent majority over the industrial areas.

Just because political power is not a remote ideal in Detroit, but an imminent possibility, there is dissension in the U.A.W. On the one side are the advocates of continued permeation. They believe, probably rightly, that a Labour Party, either in municipal or State politics, would alienate the middle-classes and the farmers and put Labour in a permanent minority, even in Michigan. So they prefer to work inside the Democratic machine. The Reuther brothers and Emil Mazey, the militant Secretary of the U.A.W., are at best tepid supporters of this policy, despite its unexpected success last November. As old-time Socialists, their inclination is to form an independent Labour Party, and no doubt they are encouraged by the example of the C.C.F., a few miles away in Windsor, to which many Canadian members of the Union belong. But their chief argument against permeation is undoubtedly a series of questions. Shall we take over the machine, or will it take us over? Is the Labour Movement strong enough, or cohesive enough, to clean up the corruption of machine politics? By forfeiting our independence, shall we not lose our bargaining power with the Democratic bosses?

There is no "correct" answer to these questions, either in Detroit or anywhere else. American politics are as mobile as American labour, and tactics must vary from place to place and from time to time. But one thing is certain. No valid analogy can be drawn from the history of the British Labour Party. Fortunately for us, we were never faced with the wholesale corruption and jerrymandering in State and city government which confront American Labour to-day. But the boss and his machine deserve an article to themselves.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

A LONDON DIARY

THE behaviour of Mr. Hayward, the Labour Party Leader of the L.C.C., after his Party's crushing defeat last Wednesday, was surely quite extraordinarily maladroit. To give the impression that he wanted to wangle a Labour majority by the election of aldermen was bad enough; to announce his plan without consulting either his own colleagues or Sir Percy Harris, whose views were bound to be of some importance, only confirmed the suspicion about boss-rule in County Hall which had already cost the London Labour much electoral support. Herbert Morrison made the same mistake as Bismarck. He constructed a system which was unworkable if ever lesser men took it over. The Socialist County Councillor in London, subject to a discipline far more severe than that of the Parliamentary Party across the river, has become a voting cypher ever since the fatal decision that policy matters should not be discussed in Council committees, but only by the inner Party caucus. The idea that this caucus system must at all costs be preserved in a Council evenly divided between Labour and Tory is downright absurd. After all, though party politics are unavoidable in local Government, there is a large area of administration in which co-operation is both habitual and sensible. Statesmanship would surely have suggested, as at least one possibility, that, since the electorate had given no clear mandate to either party, the Committee Chairmanships should be shared. I am sure that many Labour Councillors would have welcomed this as an opportunity for loosening Party discipline and giving a chance for the individual initiative which is needed in any live and vigorous local authority.

* * *

If the British and Indian Governments have their way, the Conference of Commonwealth Premiers will strictly confine itself to a single constitutional problem. It is not a new problem: it has long been obvious that the legal relations of the members of the Commonwealth would have to be reconsidered, especially in the light of the new status of India, Pakistan and Ceylon. Indian leaders have been long committed to a Republican constitution for India. They desire, however, to remain within the Commonwealth. They don't want to follow De Valera's precedent; on the contrary, they agree with General Smuts that one "must be in or out of the Commonwealth," and they would like to be "in." The problem should be soluble by common citizenship within a Commonwealth Club of which King George VI is the head. The snag is not so much the problem of squaring the circle—lawyers often manage that—but rather the attitude of Dr. Malan and General Smuts, whose last statement seems to be intended to provoke the whole issue of White domination or racial equality in the Commonwealth. The row between South Africa and India will in any case arise in the United Nations, which has on its agenda the problem of racial discrimination against Indians in South Africa. It will be unfortunate if South Africa insists on starting the row also at this Commonwealth Conference; if they do, Pandit Nehru can retort, if he thinks fit, that the majority of citizens of the British Commonwealth are "coloured," and that when General Smuts says that "if you choose to be out of the Commonwealth, you are out entirely and not on terms that can be devised," he is forgetting that it is not a coloured skin but racial Fascism that is anomalous in the Commonwealth.

* * *

The case of Mrs. Duffy is not merely one of a "girl-wife" sentenced to death for the killing of an undesirable husband and then reprieved after widespread publicity: it is also an embarrassing illustration of the chaos we have made of our law relating to murder. During last year's eight-months' "truce," when reprieve followed automatically on the death sentence while Lords and Commons played Box and Cox with the abolition proposal, the Judges, by way of showing that things were different at least for the time being, told every convicted murderer that he was to "suffer death by hanging" instead of "hanging by the neck until he was dead"; and they omitted the prayer that the Lord might have mercy on his soul. Among the murderers thus reassured were several of the worst types, and there was a bitter irony in the fact that one of the first to hang when the truce was ended was Margaret Allen, almost certainly a mental defective. Last year's abolition vote in the Commons will no doubt prove to have been the beginning of the end of hanging, but meanwhile many thoughtful people are bewildered as much by the vagaries of the reprieve system as by their unfamiliarity with the weighty evidence for abolition. The terms of reference of the Gowers Commission are not likely to permit much of that evidence to emerge, but abolition will no doubt come to this country, as it has to others, by abrogation rather than by legislation. Just at present, abrogation seems farther off than ever.

* * *

One statutory curtailment of the "freedom of the press" that seems to have fallen into disuse is section 41 of the Criminal Justice Act, 1925, which prohibits the photographing or sketching of any judge, witness, juror, or "party to any proceedings, whether civil or criminal," who is entering or leaving the building—or even the precincts of it—where any court of law is being held. To judge from the pictures that have helped to keep us informed about the Haigh case, including pictures of the gymnasts actually taking the pictures from window-sills, ledges, parapets, lamp-posts, and the roofs of cars, it seems that the police are not bothering about it any more. It was enforced fairly strictly for a few years after 1925, camera-men even being prevented by the police from photographing the Lord Mayor's coach as he went into the Old Bailey to open the sessions. Mr. Justice Avory once told a specially enterprising photographer that "the precints of the court" included the steps of the hotel where

his Lordship was staying on circuit in an Assize town! Probably the prohibition was always difficult to enforce, and the utmost vigilance could be defeated by the kind of enthusiast who used a telescopic lens to photograph Princess Elizabeth at a window of Buckingham Palace a few nights before the birth of her son. Laws that cannot be enforced should of course be scrapped; but this one will probably be kept alive so that the authorities can, when they think press enthusiasm is going too far, "make an example" of someone.

* * *

A number of readers have kindly given me details, or sent me more or less complete copies of the poem I quoted a fortnight ago. It is called Lilliput Levee and was first published in 1868. The author was W. B. Rands. It has appeared in more than one book of children's verse; notably in a volume called *Lilliput Lyrics*, illustrated by Charles Robinson and published at the Bodley Head in 1899. Judging from several letters sent me, there must be many people, like myself, who have cherished half-memories of this poem from childhood, without ever having the book to pass on to the children of this generation.

* * *

The first time I saw Mr. Ralph Slater displaying his powers of hypnosis at the Princes he was much troubled with draughts. Everyone on the stage agreed there was a terrible draught. It gave Mr. Slater a cold in the head and a troublesome cough; he was forced continually to reassure his subjects that they were in fact feeling no draught, but were warm and comfortable. Apparently a draught may wake up a hypnotised subject. But none of them did wake up and the show was technically a triumph. All the chosen victims did exactly what they were told to do to the ecstatic delight of the audience; they even lavished passionate affection on a doll while dreaming that it was a favourite film star. I found myself laughing at intervals for the next twenty-four hours. I went again the next night. Mr. Slater had obviously had a heart-to-heart talk to the manager. There were no draughts. On the contrary. It was, Mr. Slater kept saying, like a Turkish bath on the stage. Draughts it seemed had been too well eliminated. Mr. Slater was like the bow-legged man who practised Coueism so hard that he became knock-kneed. Also he was tired having given a matinee performance. Certainly something was wrong with the animal magnetism or whatever it is that they now call hypnotic power. He kept failing. One subject was perfectly in control. The others woke up just when he told them they were most firmly asleep; they tended not to do what they were told and were exchanged for other subjects or sent off to sleep again. This was a bad evening for Mr. Slater, I suppose. A perspiring evening with some loss of face. Actually I found it more instructive than the first slicker performance. The failures made the show completely convincing. They so obviously surprised and dismayed Mr. Slater. They confirmed too the observation that the easy subjects of hypnosis are the young and usually the unsophisticated. Complex and mature minds tend to resist. I should like to hear the testimony of a trained and experienced hypnotist like Mr. Slater about the claims sometimes made that "confessions" in eastern countries (never oddly enough in this country or America where they are also common) are produced by hypnosis. I suggest they would repudiate any power to compel by hypnotic suggestion a tough-minded, middle-aged man to make a public statement, lengthy and complex in content, which contradicted his faith and repudiated his life's loyalties.

CRITIC

THE MERCHANT ADVENTURERS

"The task of expanding our exports to North America is one of the greatest challenges in all our history to the merchant adventuring spirit."—The President of the Board of Trade. April 11th.

Forth goes the call to the mercantile adventurers!
Sweep the wide Atlantic in the quest for golden gain.
The Board of Trade is veering
To support of privateering,
And it's Westward ho! for dollars, and the Marshall-Truman Main!

Loud is the cry for the spirit of Dick Whittington,
Freed from the trammels of the niggling bureaucrat!
If Whittington's tradition
Speeds the treasure expedition,
The State will make available the necessary cat!

Whitehall will favour the mercantile adventurers,
Fitting out the galleons on their privateering quest,
With what commercial rapture
New markets they will capture,
Beating up the Channel with the plunder of the West!

Now is the time for adventurous aggressiveness,
Argosies of commerce the State will subsidise,
With a privateering charter
For sale, exchange and barter,
And Government facilities for private enterprise!

Here lie the bales of the British manufacturers,
Mercantile adventurers can close the dollar gap!
But will they plough the ocean
For the sake of sales-promotion,
If all their laden treasure must be poured in Whitehall's lap?

That is the catch for the mercantile adventurers!
What the incentive to sail the treasure ships?
For here is just the hell of it,
They'll never get a smell of it,
Since privateering profits are but treasure trove for Cripps.

SAGITTARIUS

J. L. HAMMOND

THROUGH the death of J. L. Hammond we have lost a generous humanist whose books rank high among the forces that shaped his generation and the next. The trilogy which he and his wife, Barbara, wrote on the history of the Industrial Revolution was decisive, not merely because it told a story of suffering and struggle with insight and dramatic power; it helped to form our values. One gained a longer spell of life by projecting one's memory, so to speak, into the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. But that was not all. One rose from these moving pages with a new understanding of what a planless society, bent on the ruthless acquisition of wealth, must mean for the working masses in misery and waste. The Hammonds never discussed the economics of capitalism and *laissez faire*, but they disposed of them more effectively than any of the academic theorists by uncovering their record.

Here was the story, generation by generation, of the degradation of the peasantry, first into a rural proletariat and then into the helpless victim of Lancashire's machines. The stages of the process were traced with scientific accuracy —the enclosure of the open fields and the theft of the commons, the servitude of the Speenhamland system, the forced migration of the pauper children, and, parallel with this Calvary, the hopeless struggle of the handicraft weavers for survival. The Hammonds never toyed with any Marxist formulation of the class struggle, but they gave us the concrete facts with deadly accuracy—the working of the law of conspiracy, the villainies of the *agents provocateurs*, the vengeance of interested magistrates and the final threat of Botany Bay. These books described for us the agony of life within the mill and the squalor of the new industrial towns. From *The Village Labourer*, *The Town Labourer* and *The Skilled Labourer* the story ran on with unflagging interest till the first glimmers of hope began to dawn in *The Bleak Age*.

The achievement was unusual because the Hammonds combined a scrupulous integrity in their laborious researches with a rare distinction of literary style. J. L. Hammond was a master of rhythmical prose, who could combine the dignity of a Gibbon with a warmth that was all his own. There are pages in these books that delight the reader's ear, while they stimulate his imagination. It is significant that biographical themes attracted him. His lives of Charles James Fox and Shaftesbury and his elaborate study of Gladstone's dealings with the Irish Question are as characteristic of him as the books that deal with the Industrial Revolution. These latter are, indeed, in some sense biographies of anonymous heroes, the labourers who combined to end their wrongs.

The man whom we have to thank for this enduring gift had a simple but sufficient motive that inspired him throughout his long life of incessant work. With his whole being he hated cruelty and oppression. There lay the emotional spring of his historical books, and this it was that made him, at the outset of his journalistic career, a passionate opponent of the Boer War. The *Speaker*, which he started at the age of 26, was in the literary sense a brilliant weekly, for Belloc and Chesterton enlivened its pages, but it failed in those days of violent political cleavage to win a wide public, because Hammond would never compromise or muffle his denunciations of the predatory aim and ruthless conduct of this sordid adventure in Imperialism. His was a singularly lovable personality, which won him the affection and admiration of many friends—his seniors like C. P. Scott, L. T. Hobhouse and Lord Courtney, no less than the young men who were proud to work with him. But with his courage went an impatience with stupidity and a contempt for dishonesty that could spur him to unflinching militancy. In spite of his physical frailty and his distaste for every aspect of soldiering, he none the less insisted on serving in the artillery during the first World War.

A wide public came to know and respect Hammond the historian. Others learned to recognise the work of his eloquent and persuasive pen in his unsigned leaders in the *Manchester Guardian*. But it was my good fortune to know him as colleague and friend from the first days of the Boer War. In him and Barbara Hammond their intimates came to see the pair who, in work and leisure, gave to their generation the perfect model of human companionship. He was, when we worked together, not merely a loyal comrade; he eased our difficulties and cheered our idle hours as much by his lively humour as by his old-world courtesy. He could tell a good story with the skill of a practised artist. Ill health obliged him to spend the greater part of his life in the country, far from Fleet Street and the British Museum, with the threat of a sudden end always hanging over him. He took his banishment gaily and I was never sure which pleasure he most enjoyed, the polishing of a perfect paragraph or the grooming of the horse on which he cantered over the Chilterns. In his generation, liberal humanism inspired a notable group of men, as disinterested as they were able. Though Nevinson and John A. Hobson were among them, there was none who surpassed Hammond in courage, humanity and creative skill.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

YUGOSLAVIA AT THE CROSSROADS

How, if at all, can the Soviet Union prevent Yugoslavia from "turning West," even though nominally still remaining Russia's ally? The simplest way, on the face of it, would be to make peace with Tito. Is it still possible? Or has the quarrel gone too far? Short of violence, the Russians have tried every possible way of undermining the "Tito Clique." The Cominform Resolution openly called on all good Communists to throw Tito out. It failed. When it comes to foiling conspiracies, Rankovic's police know how to go about the job as well as anybody. Later, after all the failures to split the nation, the Party and the Army, *Pravda* dropped a broad hint that if only Tito turned Rankovic out, peace between Belgrade and Moscow might still be possible. Tito did not fall for the offer, which amounted to an attempt to split the leadership. Instead, he saw to it that Congress after Congress was called, and that all the Communist leaders in every part of the country publicly committed themselves to supporting him against the Cominform. If there were any doubtful characters in the Montenegrin or Bosnian Governments, they were unobtrusively sacked; and, in the administration, suspected "Cominformists" were quickly eliminated. If some experienced men had to be replaced by inexperienced Tito Youth lads, it couldn't be helped.

On the face of it, it would seem that there is really only one thing to do: to organise a "palace revolution" in Belgrade. But who can do it? Rumours have been current of some arrests having recently been made in the U.D.B.A., the secret police. Their purpose is clearly to suggest that, if there is trouble inside Rankovic's police, then the game must really be up for Tito; but there is nothing to show that these rumours are more than part of the war of nerves. Another theory, put forward by some Western diplomats here, is that, sooner or later, there may be a rebellion against Tito inside the army, on the ground that, without proper arms from Russia or Czechoslovakia, it is now fit for little more than guerrilla warfare. It is, however, extremely doubtful whether the Yugoslav army, or, at any rate, its officers want to be armed and, in consequence, bossed by the Russian General Staff. General Arso Jovanovic, shot *en route* for Rumania, was in favour of this line, but there is little evidence that he had many followers among the Yugoslav officer corps. In the army, the Partisan tradition is still strong.

From Moscow's point of view, the question of the Yugoslav army is important. For a Western invading army the Croatian plain would be the shortest route into Hungary; and, as distinct from Austria, there would be no Russian troops there to stop it. The Yugoslav army, as at present organised, could not put up much of a fight against a modern Anglo-American army. From a strategic point of view, therefore, it is desirable for the Soviet Union that the Yugoslav forces should be turned into an effective standardised part of the Red Army, as the Czech and Polish armies are. Tito will not hear of it; and this is one of the fundamental reasons why, as a matter of ordinary security, the Russians would like to see Tito replaced by a more reliable military ally. This is more important to them than their alleged displeasure with Tito for having gone ahead with industrialisation too quickly.

According to Tito's speech in December, the "real" reason for the Cominform Resolution was his unwillingness to submit to the Russian demand that Yugoslavia should "await her turn," and not start industrialising until Poland and Czechoslovakia had completed their respective Five-Year Plans, and that meantime she should supply Eastern Europe with food and raw materials. It is doubtful if the issue was as simple as all that; there may have been disagreement over "tempo," but Yugoslavia had quite recently been praised by the Russians, including "Cominform" Professor Yudin, for her industrial efforts. Still, Tito's story about the Russians treating potentially wealthy Yugoslavia as a poor relation, and almost as a colony, was a good propaganda line for home consumption.

What, then, can Moscow do to get rid of Tito? A "palace revolution" (or, to put it more crudely, assassination) can never be absolutely excluded, but Tito is certainly taking every precaution not only to protect his own life, but also to train at least three possible successors—Rankovic, Djilas and Kardelj. Whether the Tito regime would collapse with Tito's death is not absolutely certain. It might, but it might not. Of course, the collapse of the Yugoslav Five-Year Plan would totally discredit the Tito regime, and then, of course, anything might happen; but if, with the help of the West, the Plan can, at least partially, be carried out, and if, moreover, trade with the West means at least a slight increase in consumer goods, Tito's position will be strengthened—and without much loss of face even amongst his Communist supporters. These naturally always like to recall that, after all, Russia bought any amount of stuff, and accepted technical aid from the West, during her first Five-Year Plan.

So, if the Russians cannot "get at Tito" either through creating a struggle amongst the Communists in Yugoslavia, or through bringing about an economic collapse (which they certainly tried to do with their economic sanctions), then there is only one possible way of causing trouble. Although Tito has been more successful than Yugoslavia's other rulers in settling the nationalities problem, it would be absurd to suppose that the Yugoslav "nation" is solidly united. Serbs and Croats are still far from loving one another, but from the Russian point of view, Croatia is not a good place for starting trouble; for if the Croats don't love the Serbs, they love the Cominform even less. Macedonia is clearly the place where the Russians would try to disrupt the national unity of Yugoslavia—if they wished to do so. Lazar Kolishevsky, the Premier of Yugoslav Macedonia, is a staunch Titoite, but can the same be said of all Macedonian Communists? Obviously not. The whole history of the Macedonian Communist Party is a patchwork of deviations. Many officials in Skoplje were born in Bulgaria; many feel a much closer affinity with Bulgaria than with Serbia; many have the "partition" of Macedonia on the brain. And from Greece and Bulgaria come voices promising the Macedonians a Great Macedonia, with Salonika as its capital!

After Moshe Pijade denounced this scheme in the Belgrade press, the Greek Communist Party denied that such an offer had ever been made; there was no question of surrendering Salonika. And yet, the idea of a Greater Communist Macedonia (with or without Salonika) must be making headway in Skoplje. Since Tito will not envisage a Balkan Federation on the lines proposed by Dimitrov, it means that the only way in which Yugoslav and Pirin (Bulgarian) Macedonia can be united is for the former to "break away from Belgrade." Is Tito to "drown in blood the Macedonian people's struggle for independence"? All these schemes appear to enjoy the support of the Greek Communist leaders, Zachariadis and Joannides; and it is just conceivable that, in the course of this year, we may see some sort of "centre of resistance" to Belgrade being set up in Macedonia, which might become the rallying point for not only the Greater Macedonia "autonomists" but also for all pro-Cominform elements in Yugoslavia.

It would be, however, a dangerous game for the Cominform to play. For what if Tito were to hit hard—at the risk of being called a Greater Serb Nationalist, but with the support of the Croats and Slovenes and all others who would be only too glad to fight this Cominform attempt to "smash Yugoslav unity"? There is some talk among diplomats in Belgrade of a *modus vivendi* being reached between Belgrade and Athens; and the Americans seem to be trying hard to get the Yugoslavs to close the Greek frontier so that no help whatsoever reaches the guerrillas from here. However, becoming pals with Athens must be the last thing in the world to suit Tito at present, and anyone demanding this from him must be crazy.

Belgrade feels that Moscow has really been "slipping," and that it could have saved itself endless trouble if it had not hurled the Cominform anathema at Yugoslavia. As long ago as last summer, during the Danube Conference in Belgrade, Anna Pauker is reported to have remarked: "If we had known they would react like this, we wouldn't have done it. We would have done something different." Russia may try to repair the consequences of a first-class blunder. But the simplest solution—making peace with Tito—is also the most difficult.

Belgrade, April. ALEXANDER WERTH

(Concluded)

THE DANCING NEEDLE

(By a Correspondent)

"UTILITY is selling, non-utility isn't." That is roughly how the trade sums up the present position in the men's clothing industry. De-rationing has merely confirmed the diagnosis that people lacked money, not coupons. Men's outfitters, finding it impossible to sell the more expensive non-utility garments, are refusing to take delivery; stocks at manufacturers and wholesalers are piling up.

This is not surprisng when one considers that, in general, the whole range of prices of non-utility clothes has trebled since before the war. One well-known West End outfitter, for instance, who used to sell suits for £8, £10 and £12, now begins his price range at £27. Wages, which represent a quarter, and the cost of raw material, which represents a half, of the wholesale price of clothing, have both doubled. Purchase tax increases the wholesale price by a third; and finally, the retailer usually adds 50 per cent. as distributor's "on-cost"—surely an excessive proportion. Thus a suit whose net wholesale value is, say, £13 10s., has £4 10s. added by purchase tax, making £18, and then 50 per cent. added by the retailer, bringing its price in the shop up to £27. A utility suit, worth £9 wholesale and carrying no purchase tax, will sell in the shop at £13 10s. That is, at the wholesale stage the non-utility is worth only £4 10s. more than the utility. In the shop it costs double. Little wonder that the trade admits that top-grade utility gives best value.

To-day four out of every five suits made come under the utility clothing scheme. Its rigorous price control at every stage in manufacture and distribution means that profit margins are tightly controlled. This has given an added impetus to a tendency, already apparent between the wars, for the manufacturer and retailer to eliminate the wholesaler and deal directly with one another. In the case of all utility and most of the cheaper priced suits "made to order," the outfitter normally will only take the customer's measurements and send these, together with the choice of cloth, direct to a clothing factory in Leeds, Manchester,

Glasgow, or the East End of London. Here, even where the most advanced mass-production methods are used, every garment is cut separately. In the case of ready-made clothing, however, as many as 24 garments can be cut at the same time by using a band-knife, which cuts through the layers of cloth as easily as a cheese-cutter through ripe Gruyère. Factories also rely increasingly on their extensive range of paper patterns which cater for every conceivable combination of measurements and for every shape of figure. The cutter merely has to cut round the pattern which most closely corresponds to the measurements, making minor alterations where necessary. The wide introduction of paper patterns and the use of the band-knife in ready-made tailoring has lowered the status of the cutter, once the aristocrat of garment workers.

After the garment has been cut, it will be sent to the factory's main workroom to be made up. Practically all the workers are women. Most of them are on piece rates and make about £4 10s. or £5 a week—not so very much when compared with the £6-£7 a week of the shorthand typist. The girls are skilled craftswomen, not just machine-minders like women in light engineering, for example. "In our industry," said a Union organiser, "the girls have virtually no mechanical aid other than the dancing needle—the sewing machine which merely works the needle up and down." True, women's wages have more than doubled since before the war—from 7½d. an hour to 1s. 5d. But charwomen to-day get 1s. 8½d., and have demonstrated for 2s. (Men in the industry earn nearly twice as much as the women.) In some modern factories the manufacture of a pair of trousers, for example, has been broken down into 24 or sometimes even 32 processes and a conveyor belt installed. In such cases the women get 1½d. an hour extra. Such a degree of specialisation is resisted by older employers and trade unionists alike as being destructive of craft skill.

In industrial centres like London, where there is a great diversity of alternative employment, the industry is finding it difficult to attract sufficient female labour—for it is on female labour that the industry mostly depends, women outnumbering men by four to one. Some factories are finding it so difficult to get even part-time workers that they are having to give out work for women to do at home. With memories of sweating still vivid, the Union is watching this development very closely. While statutory minimum wages are fixed for the industry by a Wages Council, one out of eight workers whose wages have been inspected has been found to be getting below the minimum. In the same way many of the minimum conditions for work-places laid down in the 1937 Factories Act are not being observed nor enforced.

While the greater and increasing proportion of men's clothes are factory-made, there is still a considerable number, particularly of the better class and more expensive non-utility clothes, which are made in the small workshop. Typical conditions can be found in Fashion Street, E.1. Enter this rather dingy Victorian residential street of red brick, one-storey houses. Walk through into a backyard almost entirely covered in by a sort of brick outbuilding, rather like a big garden shed, and you step back into the industrial dark ages. Sitting in traditional cross-legged style on the tables with which the workroom is almost entirely filled are a number of hunched-up men. The older ones wear caps. All have rough aprons made out of an old piece of blue serge cloth covered with fluff and cigarette ash. At the end of the room is an open fire on which the heavy "goose-irons" of the sweating under-presser are heated.

Light comes through a glass skylight coated over with years' accumulated dirt and fluff. In one corner of the room, at a little table apart from the men, sit four women who make the buttonholes and finish the coats that will be tried on in the immaculate fluorescent-lit showrooms of some West End tailor. For this is the high-class trade. Everything is hand-made and, in complete contrast to the factory, practically all the labour is male. That is axiomatic. The dearer the goods the higher the proportion of men.

The skilled workers employed in the workshop generally earn reasonable wages, about £10 per week, rather more than the men employed in factories, who average about £6 to £8. There is to-day among these better-paid craftsmen a certain amount of short-time working due to the falling off in demand for high-priced non-utility clothes. The seasonal fluctuations in employment to which the clothing industry was so subject before the war appear again to be making themselves felt—particularly in these small, highly specialised production units, where one "out-worker" may concentrate on the sewing on of trouser buttons, another on waistcoats, and so on. While out-workers are used by wholesale firms to a limited extent, they represent a quarter of the total labour force in the retail bespoke section of the industry.

The older employers and trade unionists, who are anxious to preserve tailoring as a craft, are probably fighting a losing battle. True, a Saville Row jacket, with its cunning sewn-in linen stays and thousands of hand stitches, will retain its shape far longer than a factory-made suit. But it is doubtful whether the added quality justified the enormous difference in price. In any case, the moneyed class who can afford to dress to please the fastidious *Tailor and Cutter* is on the decline, except perhaps overseas. On the other hand, the public at large has gained experience of better clothing through the utility scheme. It will not again readily accept the inferior clothing sometimes foisted on it in pre-war days.

Unfortunately, the employers in the industry seem opposed to the setting up of any minimum quality standards, contending that free competition and public good taste are sufficient protection for the consumer. In the Light Clothing Industry, the British Standards Institution has already set up certain minimum specifications, but there are no indications that it will be invited to extend its work to Heavy Clothing. Similarly, the establishment of a Development Council which could further the acceptance of minimum conditions of work and employment is opposed by the employers. In these circumstances the utility scheme remains the consumers' only safeguard as far as quality and price are concerned. Until proper standards of workmanship are generally established and accepted there must be no question of its abolition.

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.
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We believe in our Party's Policy but in local affairs we say and do what we believe to be for the general good.—Conservative Election Address, King's Lynn North. (Ella M. Perry.)

F— might easily have killed his nephew and people had got to learn that the use of knives, even on relatives, would not be tolerated.—*Richmond and Twickenham Times*. (I. Caplan.)

Hinckley Athletic football team are to be hypnotised on the eve of a cup match with Bedworth Town at Easter, in order to give them extra confidence against a side they have never before defeated.—*Leicester Mercury*. (B. E. Langford.)

New Europe. This is undoubtedly the best of all red varieties in existence. Flaming scarlet of an unusual intensity, not fading in the sun. A late flowering variety.—Gladioli catalogue. (G. C. Ziman.)

Devoted modernist or couple for slum ethical aggression via fitted car and café hall. Bible truth streamlined. Youth ability. Can share Southgate flat.—Write, experience, credentials, age and salary. —Advert. *The Friend*. (Richard Webster.)

I cannot conceive of God showing displeasure at clean washing on the line on Sundays, for it shows a clean mind, and such is the only part of us acceptable to God.—Letter in *Daily Mirror*. (K. Wyllie.)

Capt. Evans, responding, emphasised that the Corps was non-military; those who pointed to the fact that the Cadets used guns for drill did not understand that the drill was intended to inculcate a sense of discipline which was required in all walks of life, and the guns were used to help balance and a good deportment.—*Cambrian News & Welsh Farmers' Gazette*. (Joss Davies.)

A landlady complained at Salford (Lancs) rent tribunal that a sub-tenant was expecting a second child—and that, she said, was "against rules and regulations."—*Daily Mirror*. (C. Dormon.)

SO THEY SAY . . .

On April 6 the national dailies were obliged (happily or otherwise) to report that Mr. Strachey's speech in the meat debate had been howled down. They were thereby presented with an opportunity to discharge their self-stressed duty to their readers by printing the inaudible part of what the Minister had to say, which he issued later as a statement nearly 500 words in length. Here are the number of words they printed:—

News Chronicle	470	*Daily Graphic* ..	190
The Times ..	450	*Daily Mail* ..	140
Daily Telegraph	300	*Daily Mirror* ..	110
Daily Express ..	260		

Neither the *Daily Worker* nor the *Daily Herald* mentioned Strachey's statement at all—although the *Herald* was bitter in its complaint that the most important part of the Minister's speech had been "blotted out."

That Hyphenated Budget

Daily Express: JOY-THROUGH-MISERY.

News Chronicle: GRIM-AND-BEAR-IT.

Daily Herald: STICK-TO-IT.

Daily Graphic: PAY-AS-YOU-EAT.

Daily Worker: DOUBLE-CROSS.

Under-exposure

The Labour Party, which has suffered excruciating publicity recently from a certain lack of discernment in selecting photographs, last week turned at bay. Alderman Daines, secretary of the London Labour Party, charged that a Conservative broadsheet showing a mother and child being weighed at a clinic implied that the clinic was under Conservative control, when actually the photograph showed a Holborn (Labour) clinic. Mr. Brooke, L.C.C. Conservative leader, with five somewhat more crushing victories of this nature

under his belt, disdainfully denied that the Conservatives had claimed any interest in the clinic. How many papers ran this valiant, if rather lame, Labour come-back? Only the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Worker*!

Alderman Daines's statement about the most recent Labour slip-up, incidentally, appeared to undergo a curious transformation in getting into print. The *Daily Telegraph*, for instance, had him (April 5) apologising handsomely for the illustrated claim that a slum in Hoxton had been cleared by Labour gaining control of the L.C.C. in 1934, when actually it had been cleared and rebuilt under the Conservatives long before then:—

> If the Conservatives are right we can only apologise. It is just bad luck for us . . . Still, we must not deny the Conservatives credit for any of the little they actually did. We must come clean and apologise . . .

Not for readers of the *Daily Herald*, however, such craven admissions:—

> We used the photograph in good faith to show a typical London slum between the wars . . . We did not claim to have cleared it . . .

Heads and Tails

Evening News, April 7: M.P. ASKS FOR FILMS INQUIRY: PREMIER SAYS "NO."

Evening Standard, April 7: FILMS INQUIRY: ATTLEE AGREES.

AUTOLYCUS

LETTERS FROM TWO ISLANDS

Isle of Britain

. . . SOMETHING has happened to my feeling for London. I cannot get back to my old affection for it. Before the war—and then up to about 1942—I loved the place, and was far happier here than in any other city. I could spend days loitering about the West End, wandering through Fleet Street to the City, exploring suburbs as remote as Outer Mongolia. In the later years of the War, London was crowded, dirty, smelly, like an unmade bed in a cheap lodging house; but I told myself that this phase would pass and with it my feeling that here was no longer my old friend. But for some reason I cannot discover, my feeling remains the same. There has been much tidying and lighting up; attempts, small but courageous, to give London good things it never had before; the shops look better; and the West End no longer seems to be holding a giant conference of prostitutes and spivs. All this and more I recognise but do not *feel*. I still arrive at Waterloo without a lift of the heart. I go here and there in the city about my business, but all without affection. This is sad and—to me—inexplicable, like so much in this life.

Yes, you are right about the young. But have you noticed another thing about them—or is this only to be seen along these expendable frontiers of Western Democracy? It is that now times are hard and the future a blank, the girls and not the young men take charge of life. They mark down the young men they want, bustle them off to church or the registry office, and start families in conditions about as favourable to young family life as those of a gold rush. I doubt if many of these determined young women have ever argued it out with themselves. They have been moved by a profound instinct, by that piety towards the life of Earth which is their real religion. The young men may be lost in their own private wilderness of doubt or despair (which accounts for the lack of ambition among so many of them), but this only means that the female, who knows what she wants, must assume command. "Yes, darling," she says meekly as the boy friend explains why they have no future, presses his arm lovingly, and steers him in the right direction. All this could be carried much further. If the masculine principle abdicated for a hundred years or so; if goddesses of Earth returned, compelling us to venerate the soil (which has been so outraged that it may starve us yet); if realistic and humorous housewives drove the psychological misfits, the careerists and pompous asses of our sex from the seats of power; then the world might enjoy a century of much-needed convalescence. I am beginning to take a dairy-herd view of the male.

One of your admired critics has said: "In thirty years of writing, I have not gained an ounce of confidence." I feel the same. There is a play I want to write and I have already done as much planning of the action as I need to do. But this play must have an unusual texture, most of its speech expressing a level of personality below the familiar polite false surface; and if it does not achieve this texture, then it is nothing. So I am as nervous and hesitant about beginning it, putting down even the tiniest scrap of dialogue, as an old lady would be about firing a sixteen-inch gun. Any excuse not to start work on it will do for me. I hesitate longer than I did in beginning *Dangerous Corner*, and yet I have written between twenty and thirty plays since then. Now I have done my share of complaining about the English attitude towards the arts and artists; but at these times I am inclined to bless that huge wall of indifference. It would be horrible to be a *Maestro*, to announce the new opus, to report progress to inquiring admirers. Here nobody gives a damn whether I begin my play or chuck my notes into the fire, and I can wrestle in peace with my little problem. But perhaps I ought to add that once I swing into the job, living in the scenes and forgetting technique (as I always do, after giving it much thought before I begin), I shall develop confidence, like a man on a tight-rope. Only once or twice, probably, I shall look down, shudder, and ask myself what the blazes I think I am up to. A rum existence.

The most highly-praised novel here of the last few months has been *The Heat of the Day* by Elizabeth Bowen, who writes very well and has produced some uncommonly good short stories. *The Heat of the Day*, which returns us to wartime London, is written with great adroitness, and the passages describing the London of the *blitz* period should have lasting value. It is the writing that be-dazzled the highbrow reviewers, most of them being more interested in prose style than in the almost lost art of fiction. My objection to this admired novel was a simple but profound one—I could not believe a word of it. The chief characters, their relationships, actions, motives, all seemed incredible. All I saw was Miss Bowen, clever as you please, making it all up. This particular failure of response keeps happening with me, and I wish it didn't, if only because it would be pleasant to feel enthusiastic about new work. In politics I belong by temperament to the opposition, but when lots of people I meet are eager and happy in their appreciation of certain new books, plays, films, nowadays (as distinct from twenty-five years ago) I really dislike taking the opposite line, pouting and grumbling. There was a time last year when nearly everybody I met was enthusiastic about Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, which I thought skilful but contrived, about *The Glass Menagerie* which had touches of style, but was thin, whimsical, tedious, and about a film called *Fallen Idol*, which was efficiently directed but had in it a little boy character that I would almost have swapped for a bout of neuralgia. And it really worries me when I find myself at odds like this with so many nice sensible people. I begin to wonder if there is something wrong with me; and it is a fact that during or shortly after that time last year I refused to undertake several jobs that involved judging new work, on the ground that I felt myself out of touch with accepted taste. It is a nuisance too because I prefer enjoying, appreciating, praising, and do it much better than I do the other thing. So don't hesitate to let me know if you find I am grumbling and jeering too often.

Here is a passage from Mr. Edmund Wilson's *Notes On London* in the travel book he published here last year:

> In other countries, manners are intended to diminish social friction, to show people consideration and to make them feel at ease. In England it is the other way: good breeding is something you exhibit by snubbing and scoring off people. This is of course closely connected with their class system, and it is partly a question of accent, vocabulary and general style, which your inferior cannot acquire. I have been told that, when a way of talking begins to pass into common use, the higher people evolve something new which will again fence them off from the lower . . .

Well, well! I must be one of the lower people who are being fenced off, because I have certainly never been among the higher people when they have been evolving something new. In fact, although I have spent far more time in London than Mr. Wilson, I have seen and heard very little of this snubbing and scoring off and fencing off. He seems to me to be describing a small group of cocktail-party smarties, with whom most visiting American writers appear to find themselves entangled. No doubt many of our observations on American life are as rude and silly as these, though I for one have never been foolish enough to accept New York's "Café Society" as a typical cross-section of the American people. One further point is worth making. When Mr. Wilson was staying in London I was living not ten minutes walk from his hotel. I have a great respect for him as a literary critic and would have been delighted to have met him and to have had some talk. (About the English perhaps.) But nobody ever suggested it, and I never knew he had been with us until after he had gone. It is possible of course that he preferred to be where there was plenty of "snubbing and scoring off," among English good breeding. But I cannot help wondering who among us act as hosts and social guides to these visiting American writers. Whoever they are, they are certainly no friends of mine. So let us all do better next time, Mr. Wilson.

"What do you do," I asked my dentist here, a clever oldish chap, "I mean—when you're not attending to people's teeth?" I caught a glimpse then of a different man. "I keep a boat at X," he told me, in that slow easy way which hints at deep affection, "and I spend all my spare time in her—getting right away from people." And here, I think, is a man who has achieved the right balance. After hours and hours of peering at the rotting ivory in our mouths, of telling us they must come out and it will not hurt very much, of saying "rinse" to all these contorted faces, he has done with humanity and its miserable teeth, and can then drift about in his boat, listening to the mewing gulls, tacking and painting and pottering, lost in the ancient comradeship of sea and sky. And I wish I could think of something as exactly right for me as this sailing is for my dentist. But there is no escape like this for a writer. His boat would still be crowded with extractions and stoppings and dental plates to be fitted, and the very sea would be a pink froth of blood and disinfectant.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

The Arts and Entertainment

REALITY FOR THE PAINTER

PAUL KLEE, Jean Lurçat and André Bauchant make curious company for each other at the Lefevre. Klee is given a compartment to himself; but works by the other two are hung more or less alternately. Bauchant is one of the best known of the French Sunday Painters. What solid merit does this sort of work contain? As time goes by, the "perpetual revolution" mentality of the inter-war period is succeeded by a calmer one. To-day we are enabled to distinguish, with increasing certainty, that which is of permanent significance in modern painting from all that was merely a passing stimulant, a transitory experiment. And it is the innovations in form that are now seen to be the permanent contribution to the Western tradition: the startling surprises in the choice of subject matter, or, as in Bauchant, in treatment, have already only a faded interest. Braque, Picasso and Matisse are the real, the formal innovators: it is clear that each has always been content with the traditional subject matter which his immediate predecessors used. The profoundest developments of our time have taken place round a lemon and a couple of oysters on a crumpled napkin; a coffee pot and a candlestick; a shuttered window, with a woman lying before it in a deep chair.

But this is what one should expect from painting, which is an art that has no need of unusual and emotive subjects in order to fulfil its highest function. Pictorial genius can extract profound beauty from the most commonplace objects, in their everyday setting. Painting can administer its own peculiarly metaphysical shock simply by handing us back the fish, wrapped in paper, which we bought in the market; or by pointing to a corner of the room we are living in. These are transformed, "changed utterly," with the result that our sense of the miraculousness of whatever is actual will be heightened. Our surroundings will come alive again—as they were alive once before, when we were children. Londoners may recall how Sickert transformed Camden Town. After seeing his paintings, those dusky streets took on a very different aspect; even a glamour.

But miracles are unpopular now and "miraculousness" may not succeed as a definition of the quality I am trying to describe. Yet it is certain that this heightened sense of reality, which is the very essence of art, is clearly distinct from the reality which science describes. To the artist the hollow gloom of a railway station or the smiling poise of a flowering chestnut tree are facts at least as real as the actual station or tree. Such qualities are tangible realities to the artist: he takes hold of that gloom or that poise and *uses* them. But for the scientist the quality of personality, which all inanimate things possess, is at once destroyed. His reality consists of invisible configurations, which even the microscope cannot bring within the experience of his senses. The intuitive reality of art and the rational reality of science are certainly not in conflict: but the rationally minded must not assume that artistic reality can be reduced to rational terms.

Bauchant did not seize very forcibly on any reality. A vision of things that was already common property was rendered once again by him: his version differs from previous ones on account of his lack of normal professional skill. I think it a mistake to confuse the resulting naivety with poetic simplicity.

By contrast, Lurçat is immensely sophisticated, immensely conscious of both his aims and his actual creative processes. A minor artist of acute intelligence, he is one of those who must make their contact with life somewhat vicariously, through others. All artists begin in this manner. But the best develop a kind of double glance: on the one hand they discover reality by looking at paintings; and, on the other, they discover new ways of painting by directly confronting reality themselves. Only thus can new rhythms be extracted from, as we say, "nature": only thus can we become conscious of new aspects of reality. Lurçat's canvasses contain no new or surprising rhythms. His construction of an imaginary seascape, with fragmentary harbour walls set at intervals in the waves, has indeed an element of poetry in it: yet as a pictorial structure it is very tame and ordinary; and his actual brushwork borders on the banal.

PATRICK HERON

RADIO NOTES

IMAGINE a critic who took as his province not only the week's output of books of every kind but also the week's plays and films, art exhibitions and concerts, and then, for good measure, added the week's newspapers and periodicals both national and provincial. He would be a monster. Such a monster, from the very nature of the mass and variety of the material he must listen to, is the radio critic; but monster though he is, he is still almost human, and the human crop wasn't made to digest in such enormous quantities the heterogeneous fare he must take in if he is to do his job conscientiously. Sooner or later, then, in every radio critic's career acute mental dyspepsia occurs. When that happens, there is only one cure for him: he must stop listening and go back to a light diet of reading or modern sculpture. These notes, therefore, are in the nature of a farewell to radio criticism after fifteen months' professional listening.

Looking back, one realises that all the time while criticising broadcasting one has, in fact, been criticising the present state of English culture. Where the B.B.C. is lacking is precisely where our culture is lacking, and this in itself often makes for apparent unfairness to the B.B.C. In the existence of the Third, Home Service and Light Programme the obvious rifts in our culture have received something like official recognition. But there are other rifts less obvious. There is that, for instance, between the scientifically educated and those educated in the humanities. Until it is closed, the popularisation of science such as one has often demanded of the B.B.C. will be impossible on any scale larger than that existing at present, when we rely mainly on Mrs. Nesta Pain and her associates, Dr. Bronowski and a handful of broadcasters chiefly in the Forces Educational Programmes. In other words, the B.B.C.'s treatment of science reflects faithfully the inadequacies of an educational system which brings up the literary-minded (who are generally the people who plan, produce and write programmes) in ignorance of science, and the scientists in apparent inability to express themselves or their findings to any outside their fellow-specialists. It is against this background that features like Mrs. Pain's must be judged; their achievement is then seen to be considerable.

Then, how often has one asked for more imaginative writing on the air or pointed out that, by and large, the best writers for radio are still those who came to the medium with reputations made in other fields. Again, the responsibility is not the B.B.C.'s; the dearth of radio material by new writers reflects the dearth of new talent in imaginative writing generally. There is similarly the recurrent demand for more broadcast controversy. The B.B.C. does its best; but, except in the sphere of foreign affairs, we live in a time strikingly deficient in that "passionate intensity" which alone gives conviction to controversy in the arts, religion and politics.

Much of our dissatisfaction with B.B.C. programmes, then, turns out to be a general dissatisfaction with the state of our culture. The B.B.C. gets the kicks which our culture as a whole should get. Doubtless, this is bad luck on the B.B.C. Yet it seems to me one of the main functions of the radio critic, at any rate in a journal of this kind, to bring home to it continually the fact that it *is* a microcosm of the condition of culture at any given time; to make it aware, too, that the condition of culture is constantly changing and that it is its task to reflect these changes as they occur. Of itself the B.B.C. cannot bridge the gap between the scientists and the rest of us, cannot bring about a renascence of imaginative writing, cannot broadcast controversy where none exists. But it must hold itself always in readiness against the day when the gap is bridged, when imagination is reborn, when opinions are again fierce, clear-cut and clashing. Its receptivity to such cultural changes depends, to a greater extent perhaps than we imagine, on the existence of vigilant criticism.

WILLIAM SALTER

THE OTHER THEATRE

THE function of the small theatres—The Other Theatre, as Mr. Norman Marshall has christened it—is to put on plays that are worth seeing, but which for one reason or another the so-called commercial managers will not risk. The three productions to be seen in the outer circles last week were very typical of the way in which, at the moment, The Other Theatre is performing its functions. A verse play *Stone in the Midst* by Patric Dickinson is at the Mercury; at the Bolton's is *The Horn of the Moon*, a blood-and-lust drama by Vivian Connell; and, the most conventional (and the most competent) of the three, is a sociological play *The Monkey Puzzle* by Shirley Cox at the New Lindsey. None of these plays was very likely to have been performed had it not been for the small theatres, though each for a different reason.

Miss Shirley Cox's play *The Monkey Puzzle*, for instance, is, in design, a conventional piece well-built on the accepted model of the contemporary straight play: that is, with sound characterisation, convincing realistic dialogue, carefully planned climaxes and, over and above this sound craftsmanship, that special trick of engaging an audience's sympathy so that we "lose ourselves," as they say, in the people and the happenings. Why, then, with these qualities, is *The Monkey Puzzle* being put on at Notting Hill Gate instead of in Shaftesbury Avenue? Because of its subject. Not that it touches on one of the censorable topics, sex, politics or religion; but that it is gloomy. It harrows us with a picture of a private "home" for old ladies, dumped there by relatives who can't be bothered with them. The home is run by a cruel, spiteful, vulgar nurse (Vida Hope plays this part very effectively) who exercises a horrible tyranny over the helpless women whom she squeezes of their last penny and robs of their last comforts. The measure of the author's success in bringing her subject to life is that her play really is too gloomy, lit only by a few macabre touches of humour supplied by the local undertaker (Philip Stainton). Too gloomy, that is, for her to expect a commercial management to take a chance on it—certainly without having first seen how it goes.

The case of *The Horn of the Moon* is different. Yet this, too, is a play built on conventional lines, technically perfectly straightforward; and the critics in the B.B.C. Sunday programme all agreed at least in having spent a most enjoyable evening in the theatre at it. Why, then, is this play being shown in Kensington? Simply because of that amiable anomaly, the Censor of Plays. But let me hasten to remind you (lest anyone should be lured to the Box Office on false pretences) that the censorship represents the lowest common denominator of orthodox morality. There are several what used to be called "strong" love scenes but nothing that would possibly shock anyone not determined to be shocked. Almost every modern novel has scenes that are many times stronger (but then the publishers have not banded together in their Association to agree that someone should ban their own books).

Mr. Connell's play makes an interesting evening although it does not really quite come off. It is certainly much better written than ninety per cent of the stuff that reaches the West End, but, for something which aims to cut deeper, it is not quite well written enough. Mr. Connell

seems have used up his audacity on the situations and kept none over for the language which was what, if I remember rightly, distinguished his early play, *The Nineteenth Hole of Europe*. *The Horn of the Moon* opens like *The Plumed Serpent* after a bull fight where a sensitive young man has been sick at the sight of blood. His Lawrentian wife despises his weakness and responds to the blood-call of a he-man (John Wyse), all the more so as the sensitive young husband has refused to go out with the he-man to the rescue of a wrecked boat at the height of one of the most convincing storms I have ever experienced in the theatre (congratulations to the stage manager). Mr. Connell displays a considerable gift for evoking atmosphere and it is this which carries his play through; but, at bottom, his types, like his situations, are from stock. They may be new to the stage but they are not new to anyone else. And, dear me, what a bore the sensitive young man of the English stage is becoming, with his tightly shut mouth and his all too recurrent outbursts of self-pity!

The stock sensitive young man turns up again in Mr. Dickinson's *Stone in the Midst*. Here he is once again pitying himself for the first twenty-five minutes of duologue with a sensitive young woman and continuing to pity himself at intervals throughout three full acts. It would be no kindness to Mr. Dickinson to pretend that his play was a success. His play craftsmanship is at present almost non-existent. His fable—of a country of the sensitive in the occupation of Fascist Philistines—is not only feebly managed, it is also completely at odds with his poetic resources. Mr. Dickinson's gift as a poet seems to be lyrical and contemplative, and this produces many individual felicities. But his language is nowhere appropriate to his theme of resistance and brutality. What is lacking from his line is the specifically theatrical element, the rhetorical. But perhaps with another theme, something more pastoral for instance, Mr. Dickinson might produce this. In any case the Mercury Theatre is certainly fulfilling its function in giving this play a hearing. Nothing can teach a young playwright except seeing his work performed; and the difficulty of achieving this usually is what keeps many people from writing for the theatre.

It will be noticed that in each of these three plays—Mr. Dickinson's is not an exception—it is the subject that makes the play unacceptable to the wider public. What is missing from all the work at present to be seen in the smaller theatres is experiment in technique. London today cannot boast one theatre which can really be called *avant garde*. This is an extraordinary situation for a capital city. T. C. WORSLEY

THE MOVIES

"Germany Year Zero," at the Curzon
"Joan of Arc," at the London Pavilion

Tragic reporting is perhaps the best description for those two war films of Rossellini's *Open City* and *Germany Year Zero*. In Rome he found the war of curfew, food shortages, street-fighting, the heroism of resistance; he goes now to Berlin, with the war over, to discover an even grimmer battle among the ruins. Here bare cupboards have become permanent, and every individual lives at the expense of others; what one finds another will be without; the living are those who have successfully hunted cigarettes, the snappers-up of coals and potatoes. The siege, in modern warfare, follows the fighting, and starvation is the price of defeat. So to Berlin, with the sympathy of the semi-defeated comes Rossellini with his camera.

The ruins in themselves provide a terrible imagery. Again and again, in appalled fascination, the view lifts to that skyline of gaping windows, jagged pinnacles and heaped rubble. Antiquity seems already to cling to these remnants and Rossellini has chosen to photograph them in a sunlight that might belong to Herculaneum or Carthage. In what was once an important square a group of broken statuary catches the eye; children play where once the fountains played, perching on the heads of tritons and climbing in and out of the smashed basins. A moment of hideous irony is attained in the shattered Chancellory, whither a sightseeing cluster of English soldiers have been attracted; a small boy comes up with a tempting souvenir for sale, the gramophone record of a Hitler speech; the record is put on, and that demoniac voice echoes again in the walls that once housed it; to its sound a German father holding a child by the hand begins to shuffle away along an empty gallery.

A boy of thirteen is the victim of *Germany Year Zero*. We see him first helping to dig graves in a cemetery, but that is a job reserved for those over fifteen and he quickly loses it. He is turned away from the crowd armed with knives that has gathered in the street round a dead horse. An ex-schoolmaster corrupts him and sends him out to peddle articles (including the gramophone record). A girl of fourteen takes him as a lover. Some words about the uselessness of protecting the weak persuade him to poison his invalid father, who is in the habit of praying for death that won't come. From this point, with the father's murder, the film builds up a towering sequence that ends—as we soon suspect—in the boy's suicide.

What gives the picture a peculiar strength and horror is the boy's relapse into the childishness that should properly have been his: walking through the streets, with no one to turn to, he breaks into a hopping game from one dark patch on the stones to another. The reverie that ends in his death is conveyed by actions such as this; and how well the part has been played by Edmund Meschke, whether brilliantly or dully, is rather hard to determine—not he, but his actions, give him away. This was obviously Rossellini's intention, and its effect on the audience is, to say the least of it, powerful. There are the battered buildings all round; here is the battered life.

But through such methods we don't of course get to know this child as we did the bride and the priest in *Open City*. There is the feeling that Rossellini is here moving among a strange people (as of course to him they were), who remain strangers. That does not seem to me necessarily a fault, but it means that the "tragic reporting" of *Germany Year Zero* tends more to reporting than to tragedy. As such, it seems to me a film of inescapable irony and pity.

A fortune and two and a half hours of Technicolor have been lavished on *Joan of Arc*, with results that could have been forecast before Hollywood set to work. Miss Ingrid Bergman does her beautiful best as (in Cauchon or somebody's phrase) "a very pretty girl in armour, and exciting to look at." Only the meeting with the Dauphin (well played by José Ferrer) and the trial come respectably out of this orgy, which won't, I trust, start a fashion in the less amenable saints. I dread encountering, say, Mr. Edmund Gwenn as St. Francis of Assisi.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

SONNET FOR GOOD FRIDAY

(from Petrarch)

Father of Heaven, after the lost days,
After the nights eaten with desire,
Wondering at the fire
That dries my heart of all enterprise,
Please you to pour new grace
Into my veins empty of all power;
Please you to let my adversary tire
Of digging pitfalls for me, go his ways.

Lord, unpitied ten years I have served
This tyrant. I who dare
Nothing against him feel him the more harsh.
Pity this misery no man deserved,
Teach my thoughts how to forget their care,
Forget their care, remembering your Cross.

GRAHAM HOUGH

Correspondence

THE NATIONAL PARKS BILL

SIR,—The debate on the National Parks Bill revealed at once a general agreement with the objects of the Bill and a widespread conviction that those objects will not be attained unless it is considerably amended in Committee. At least thirteen speakers (of whom six were supporters of the Government and two Independents) advocated one or both of two alterations—a strengthening of the National Parks Commission and an increase in the proportion of nominated "national" members on the local park committees. The few who expressed satisfaction with the constitution of the local committees as proposed in the Bill seemed to be under a misapprehension, for the burden of their argument was that residents within the National Parks are their best guardians. It therefore needs emphasis that the committees will not represent the residents in National Parks, but the Councils of counties which happen to include part of the park area. In the Lake District this would mean (at least as regards Cumberland and Lancashire) the predominant influence of electors who live outside the Lake District and may have, for example, a strong interest in drawing water supplies from that district in the cheapest way. Both in the Lake District and in the Peak of Derbyshire it would mean a strange inequity in the representation of local interests. The people of the County of Lancashire would have a direct voice in the control of the Lake District Park which would be denied to the people of Yorkshire and to the inhabitants of the county boroughs in Lancashire itself, great as is their interest in the district as a holiday resort. In the Peak, those who live, not in the Peak, but in the south of Derbyshire would be represented, while residents in Sheffield and Manchester would not.

One further point. The debate showed that, unless the Bill is amended, grants in aid will not be available to meet the greatest need of all—that of enabling local authorities, without due cost to themselves, to prefer (say, in the supply of water or electricity) a more expensive but innocuous scheme to one that would be cheaper but ruinous to the landscape.

Lower Heyford. REGINALD LENNARD

GUNS BEFORE TAX RELIEF

SIR,—The inherent contradiction between the foreign policy of Ernest Bevin and the progress of Socialism in Britain, which has apparently been ignored by the greater part of the Labour movement for so long, has manifested itself this week in no uncertain manner. The crucial fact which emerges from the Cripps Budget is that the military commitments which have been undertaken by this country are quite capable, by their consequences, of removing Labour from office in 1950. "Guns before tax relief" is a policy anomalous enough when coming from a Labour Government, but when it is clear that we will not have enough guns anyway, even if we knew against whom they were to be employed, the policy ceases to be anomalous, and borders on lunacy.

If the trade unions continue to support Bevin's foreign policy, then they must also support the Budget policy as its natural corollary. This they hardly seem likely to do, if the Hewitson speech is not—as it clearly isn't—an isolated incident. Marshall Aid, which we hoped we could use to build Socialism in Britain, has shown its strings, which are quite capable of yanking a Tory Government into power next year.

And only the cryptos will be able to say "I told you so."

VICTOR L. SANDELSON

26 Trinity Street,
Cambridge.

THE COST OF DYING

SIR,—C. H. Rolph paints a black enough picture of Undertakers and their nefarious practices (NEW STATESMAN & NATION, April 2) in the exploitation of the bereaved. If, according to him, they are so unscrupulous with the bereaved, surely they are not likely to be any more honourable in dealing with their employees. Indeed, history shows that with

few exceptions Undertakers have been notoriously bad employers. Thirty years ago a handful of London funeral workers got together and formed the British Funeral Workers' Association (now the National Union of Funeral and Cemetery Workers) *not* as C. H. Rolph seems to think, in order to exploit the public still further but to protect themselves against their "masters." The objects of the workers were to raise their miserable pay, to improve their intolerable working conditions and shorten the then long working week of up to sixty hours or more.

The agreements C. H. Rolph refers to are those of the National Union of Funeral and Cemetery Workers and are evidence of the employees' attempts to protect themselves from unrestricted exploitation. It will be realised that more Bearers are required to carry a heavy coffin than a light one, hence the reason for stipulated staffs to be employed. It is not an uncommon occurrence for a Bearer to receive an injury as a result of undue strain when an insufficient staff is engaged. The varying rates of pay are applicable to Casual Bearers only and amount to a few shillings at the maximum.

So long as the funeral trade remains in the hands of private enterprise it is to be expected that an Undertaker will, when the opportunity presents itself, persuade a customer to purchase expensive furnishings and services. The furnishings may include an expensive and heavy oak coffin or casket. It is therefore surely not unreasonable for the Casual Bearer to receive a few extra shillings for the services he renders on such a funeral. In the case of full-time employees no extra payments are made irrespective of the charge made by the Undertaker. No doubt Undertakers would prefer to employ as few men as possible on each funeral and work them as in the good old days when there were no trade unions to protect employees. But despite the existence of agreements, cases of understaffing are constantly occurring and nobody seems to be able to do anything about it, to the consternation of the Union and to the delight and financial advantage of the Undertakers. Since the outbreak of the war "shortage of manpower" has been a convenient excuse for understaffing.

The 2½ per cent. commission is paid as part of a shop manager's salary, the gross sum of which is not in excess of that paid to employees in comparable occupations. Commission in the funeral trade is apparently considered by C. H. Rolph to be unethical but it is not an unusual aspect of private enterprise.

The clause in the agreement "Coachmen not to act as Bearers whilst driving" was in effect a safety measure designed to avoid the risk of horses being left unattended—a risk many Undertakers were prepared to take in order to keep down costs and increase profit margins.

Whatever the public may think about other aspects of the disposal of the dead and the Undertaking business, we are sure they would wish to feel that the men engaged on this essential work of disposing of the dead should at least have a living wage and decent working conditions.

Despite the existence of the funeral workers' Union, and certainly because of its weakness, the rates and conditions of funeral workers have for years been much worse than the rates and conditions of workers engaged on comparable work. Far from being an organisation to exploit the bereaved, the National Union of Funeral and Cemetery Workers has tried, *inter alia*, to see that the public get from the Undertakers the goods and services they are charged for. The interests of Undertakers and their employees are diametrically opposed, and any advances in pay and improvements in conditions (shorter hours, holidays with pay, etc.) have been forced from the Undertakers by Statutory Arbitration.

In conclusion, the Union will welcome any measure designed to provide an efficient and economic service for the disposal of the dead, and C. H. Rolph can rest assured that our members do not consider that they have a vested interest in bereavement.

E. ANDERSON, *General Secretary*
National Union of Funeral and Cemetery Workers.

SIR,—Mr. Rolph is wrong in saying that the St. Marylebone Borough Council's scheme for a Crematorium "had to be abandoned." In fact, with the powers conferred by Section 64 of the London County Council (General Purposes) Act of 1935, my Council were able to proceed with their scheme. The St. Marylebone Crematorium was duly completed, and opened for cremations in December, 1937.

S. J. RUTTY, *Town Clerk*
St. Marylebone, W.1.

RUMANIA

SIR,—I have just returned from a short visit to Rumania, to hear that a new protest has been made against the enslavement of the Rumanian people. Who are these slaves? Not the peasants of the village at which I unexpectedly stopped; they were all clad in boots and shoes, they had a wash-house with showers, a village hospital and dispensary with free treatment, a resident doctor, a dentist three times per week, a crêche, a home and special school for children orphaned during the war, a village school with compulsory attendance for children, where the adults were also learning to read and write, a visiting library and a daily service of newspapers—all recently introduced. Not the workers at the large Grivita Locomotive Works in Bucharest where during a strike against starvation wages the Maniu Government in 1933 turned the soldiers on their comrades and massacred 400 of them in the yard. Now a magnificent hospital for the workers occupies this site, beautifully equipped with X-ray units. They have a cheap and efficient canteen, a spacious club with rest-rooms, library and games-rooms, a theatre of their own that rivals those in the West End, massed choirs that specialise in folk music of all the national groups, an orchestra, and folk-dancing groups, and a newspaper of their own. If not the peasants and the workers who then is enslaved? Is it slavery to be prevented from perpetuating a serfdom, illiterate, unwashed, unhealthy, untended, prejudiced and brutalised? Or to be refused the right of shooting down workers in cold blood because they protest against starvation? I saw the children in that orphanage cuddling their matron. I played with those children and I will not forget it. My eyes at any rate do not deceive me. These people will fight like tigers to retain their new "slavery."

HYMAN LEVY
43a Philbeach Gardens, S.W.5.

SOCIAL PRAGMATISM

SIR,—I had looked forward to reading a review of my book in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, because I imagined that even if adverse it would be penetrating, and in any case *about* my thesis, or some aspect of it. But really . . . "Mrs. Freed says that people's conduct *must* be socially pragmatic . . . but the 'must' in this statement is a rational 'must.' . . . The 'must' of a scientific law is an empirical 'must.' If the 'must' of social pragmatism were the 'must' of science. . . ."

On a point of fact: There is no "must" of social pragmatism, and I should really be obliged if your reviewer would state on what page he has found one, or, as I think he will fail to find one unless perhaps in such a phrase as "It must not be supposed . . .", from what passage he has inferred the presence of this apocalyptic "must." Far from arguing that people's conduct "must" be social-pragmatic, I argue that it *won't* be unless they have "benevolence" (defined as a form of desire—of "goodwill").

The effect of being solemnly rebuked for some piece of nonsense emanating purely from the imagination of your reviewer is simply excruciating; however, I realise that I can hardly expect you to print my own summary of my thesis—of which evidently not a scintilla has penetrated to the brain of my anonymous critic. But in regard to his remark that "if this book is not ethics it is not anything" you will perhaps allow me just to state that my claim to have propounded a non-ethical theory of conduct rests, on the negative side, upon a reasoned repudiation of the moral "ought" in any of its forms, and on the positive side, upon my having isolated and "disentangled" from ethics an existing body of widely-accepted concepts about the socially desirable and undesirable—as distinct from the "moral"—in conduct and in events. I argue that given goodwill, we have here an adequate basis for principles and policies conducive to human advantage both particular and general.

LAN FREED
Pine Hill, Hazlemere,
High Wycombe.

RITUAL MUTILATION

SIR,—I know nothing about Sierra Leone, Guinea, Senegambia, Benin, Akikuyu, or the Bechuanas. I did, however, for two years during the early part of the war, have the privilege of being a guest of the people of Northern Ethiopia and I have many friends in Addis Ababa.

May I please ask Mr. Brailsford from where he has obtained his knowledge that mutilation is common among Ethiopian women? I have never heard of a single case. As a Commander of Ethiopian troops, I have every reason to believe that Mr. Brailsford is misinformed. If so, I hope he will withdraw his allegations against a country which perhaps comes in for more than its fair share of criticism.

A. S. RAILTON
Raby Road,
Stockton-on-Tees.

[Mr. Brailsford writes: If Mr. Railton will read my letter again, he will see that I gave my reference to Hasting's *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* (six articles in Vol. III, by authoritative writers on "circumcision"). I also pointed out that since then there has been no recent edition of this standard work, these authors spoke for the previous generation. Dr. H. Gray mentions Abyssinians generally, and particularly the Gallas, Danakil and Sommalis as addicted to these practices. It may well be that they are not now usual in Addis Ababa, whose people belong to none of these three tribes. In any event a rite which has died out in a capital city may linger in rural and backward areas. I doubt, however, whether a European sojourner would necessarily know the facts in such a matter as this, unless he were in medical practice.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—The date of Miss Hills Young's memorandum is immaterial. It is a description by an eye witness of an age-old custom and will be horribly accurate just so long as the custom persists.

Generalisations such as Mr. Mayall's "great improvement" are not convincing. Statistics are what are required: the Sudan Government through its Hospital system, midwives, etc., is in a position to quote sufficiently accurate ones. As long as it does not do so it is reasonable to assume that such statistics are not favourable to the only possible improvement—that of reduction in pharaonic circumcision.

Fortunately a small number of educated Sudanese are beginning to look round for a means of abolishing this form of circumcision but do not yet know where to start and I venture to prophesy that when their ideas crystallise the bogy of grandmothers will not be found to be insurmountable. I quote from a letter I received last week from a Sudanese studying in England. "Once we admit it being a shameful thing we have to do something to stop it. The matter is entirely in the hands of the men."

CONSTANCE E. HUDDLESTON
7 Cleveland Row,
S.W.1.

THE GENIUS OF IBSEN

SIR,—I would like to mention one example that illustrates the universal nature of Ibsen's genius. In September, 1946, some Indian amateurs produced *The Doll's House* at the Gaiety Theatre in Simla. The scene was changed to Calcutta; time, the present; costume, Indian; presents had been bought for the Festival of Lights (Divali); Nora was given a Hindu name and the doctor became Dr. Hafiz (a sly dig at the Muslims, who are supposed to be total abstainers); "Is that my little *bulbul* twittering out there," were Helmer's first words.

These changes were astonishingly apt and the moral needed no pointing. It confirms what Mr. Anderson said in a letter you published last week, that the setting of *The Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, and *The Pillars of Society*, with a change in the characters' names, "might be transferred to Birmingham or Philadelphia without any loss of their significance." The transference to India is even more appropriate because there the doll's house menage in its crude form is as much a feature of middle-class life to-day as it was in Europe when Ibsen wrote his play.

PATRICIA J. LLOYD
Withey Close West,
Bristol, 9.

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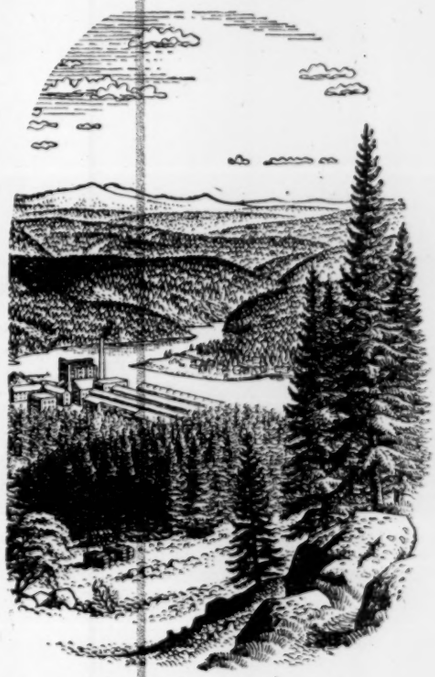

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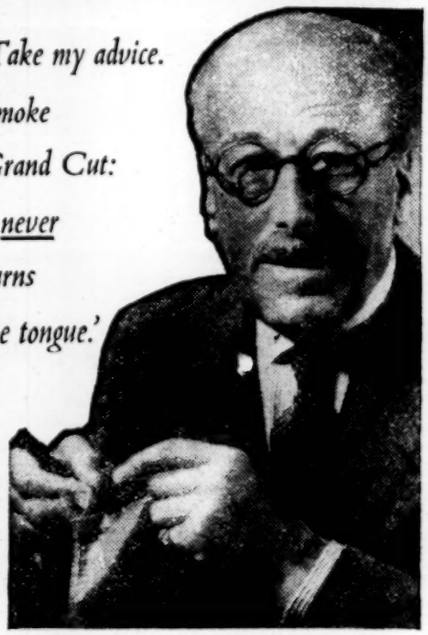

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE chorus of well-appointed reverence which surrounds the work of Henry James has not changed much in the last thirty years: it breaks up occasionally for wars, which are, you may say, a distraction; but it soon re-forms, the low buzz of respectful voices is heard again, and it has now become such a permanent accompaniment to the literary scene that it is a grave peril to one's critical life to venture a dissentient note. True, there have on occasion been dissonances; not perhaps bricks, but objects scarcely less unsympathetic, have been, if not dropped, permitted to escape. Mr. Forster has complained that the clothes of James's characters do not take off: and Wells advanced some brutal and ill-judged analogy about a hippopotamus picking up a pea; but it is generally felt that it is the part of good breeding to ignore these awkwardnesses; it is well known that if you ignore a thing steadily enough it sometimes disappears.

In fact, something of the kind seems to have happened. The dislike of the content of James's writing that these discordant voices imply does seem to have disappeared, or no longer seems to matter to his admirers. This is most likely because of a change in critical interests; character and incident, and all the time-honoured properties of the novel are left to the middle-brows; the sense of normal human values begins to evaporate, somewhere in the twenties; and the serious students of the art devote their attention to texture and the varieties of narrative method. And whatever else went with it, this change of perspective was necessary: for the novel until recently had never been the object of the concentrated technical analysis that has been applied to poetry and drama.

However, the novel was hardly designed for purists: it is indeed a distressingly impure art. To talk about the form of a novel is to approach perceptibly nearer to metaphor than to talk about that of a sonnet, and perhaps its most remarkable feature is the slap-happy and ham-handed methods by which success in it can be achieved. Not perhaps the highest kind of success—but still enough to set one wondering whether the technical and methodological critics are really talking about the fundamental thing. If they are, the colossal prestige of James is easy enough to understand, for no novel-reader who cares for supreme technical distinction, both of structure and of detail (and indifference to this condemns the novel to a perpetually second-rate existence), can fail to approach James's writing with something like awe. But alas, (or thank heaven, as the case may be) the novel has matter as well as form; and when the common reader approaches the art, as he commonly does, from this side, surely he is right. For before it is anything else, the novel is surely a commentary on, or a presentation of what, if I may use a vulgar phrase, can still only be called human life. The thing still exists, and it seems to exist under fairly determinate conditions: and if a novelist is to be among the greatest, the first thing we may expect of him is that he should get the conditions right. Of course the individual novelist only deals with a tiny area of this notoriously extensive field, but it is still advisable that he shall know, or appear to know, where his tiny area fits into the larger map, and how much ground it covers. I don't believe that Jane Austen knows this; and that is why Charlotte Brontë's attack on her, rude and provincial though it may be, is still valid. Still less do I believe that James knows it.

Dr. Leavis apparently thinks otherwise. In his recent study of the novel, *The Great Tradition* (Chatto & Windus) he places James decisively in the first division of the first class, while the majority of English candidates are hardly even awarded pass degrees. Dr. Leavis is not among the low-voiced murmurers; he approaches life as a rugged moralist (he puts a footnote on page 13 to say so), and the novel as a criticism of life. Is it possible that he, and those who rate James as highly as he does, are deceived; that a just admiration for supreme technical refinement leads them to credit James with a range and moral insight that he does not possess?

One of Dr. Leavis's classics is *The Bostonians*, and he praises the delicate rightness with which James defines the Boston culture that is his field. He and his author alike only miss one thing out—the essential vileness of the situation that the novel describes, the possession of a young girl by a ghastly intellectual harpy. James remains singularly complaisant about all this. He presents the hideous emotional bullying by which Verena Tarrant is enslaved with consummate skill, but he does not appear to think it particularly remarkable or ugly. And when she ultimately escapes, in a final scene which, try as I will, I cannot see except as a vamped-up *coup-de-théatre*, he finds it only a doubtful subject of congratulation. She escapes to marry a man she loves, a man of character, the best example of ordinary human sanity in the book.

> But though she was glad, he presently discovered that, beneath her hood, she was in tears. It is to be feared that with the union, so far from brilliant, into which she was about to enter, they were not the last she was destined to shed.

Why? Not because she has lost anything worth having; James is at pains to emphasise the third-rate pretentiousness of Olive Chancellor's feminist world. Because she is about to make an unbrilliant marriage; because her husband is not likely to be a material success.

A similar blindness to the essential basis of the situation vitiates *The Golden Bowl*. The imbroglio is horrid enough—that Maggie Verver's princely husband forms an illicit alliance with her father's wife; and we are made vividly aware of all its sinister undertones. But what are the initial data? The inevitable American millionaire has encouraged a match between his daughter and a Roman prince, an incongruous marriage which has no decent justification, which stripped of the circumlocutions that surround it, is the familiar swap between rank and money. And Maggie has an attachment to her father that makes her manifestly unfit to marry anyone. These facts James wholly ignores. If anything can atone for the staggering insensibility to these social and emotional falsities, it is the labyrinthine skill with which he explores their consequences. But can anything atone for it? Can anything atone for *The Aspern Papers*, in which the Bordereaus are subjected to an intolerable persecution, with the interested acquiescence of the author? Or for the fact that the whole beautifully contrived structure of *The Ambassadors* is founded on a question which no one but a social columnist could think worth considering? Or at least, can anyone who cares for anything more than technical achievement attribute greatness to novels built on such foundations?

Dr. Leavis himself, with a certain amount of hedging, deprecates the later James. But he invites us to consider his work as a whole the revelation of "high civilisation." What is the civilisation that is revealed? Many of James's characters are presented to us as the fine flower of an elaborate culture. But the portrayal of their culture is never more than a token payment. We hardly find them thinking about anything but a sort of dehydrated personal relations. They have no religion, not even a consciousness that such a thing has ever existed. Their æsthetic life is wholly parasitic—their care for art is the collection of "pieces." Even at the superficial social level the picture of "civilisation" is often false. James has been credited with some peculiar outsider's insight into the life of the English country house. I suppose his classic country house is that in *The Portrait of a Lady*. But it belongs to an American millionaire, who has merely bought it, and its inhabitants are blankly and uniformly ignorant of the kind of life which has brought the house into being, and of which it is the expression. American women's magazines are haunted by a concern with something called "gracious living": there are moments when one suspects that they are the unacknowledged progeny of Henry James. If European civilisation were only this, its extremity in our own day would hardly matter. If its guardians were reduced to ciceroni and purchaseable marriage partners, if hard currency were the only means of access to its decaying splendours, it would be something like this. But even now, in its mortal sickness, it is something tougher.

There is no reason why the novelist should write about the normal human situation, still less why he should confine his approval to it. But it is of the highest importance that he should know approximately what it is. It does not greatly matter that hardly anyone in James has an ordinary marriage, or ordinary relations with his children, or that the family, which still remains, in spite of all attenuations, the irreducible social unit, should have no existence for him. What does matter is that he should remain unconscious that these norms exist. It does not even matter that he deals mainly with the small and stuffy province of the expatriate rich. What does matter is that he is totally unaware of its place in the total scheme of things. To him money assumes an almost transcendental importance. The possession of it by his retired American magnates is regarded as an automatic and legitimate passport to all that the laborious centuries of European civilisation, or all that he can see of it, have built up. He never suspects that his Ververs and his Touchetts are monstrous anomalies in the world on which they have imposed themselves. Vulgarity, unless you mean by it the mere infraction of an accidental social code, is a dislocation of values. Henry James achieves it in its most refined form.

Ultimately it is the same bad smell that so often drifts across the Atlantic, the bad smell that makes even American generosity and American idealism faintly suspect to the European mind—the tacit overestimate of what money can buy. The only question ultimately worth asking about a serious novelist is what his scale of values is: and James steadily demands to be judged by those standards. What in him does it all add up to? The intellectual pretensions of his characters turn out to be gas or promissory notes. The moral edifice which they build up is a pyramid standing on its apex. Their "fineness" is a genius for pursuing the inessential to its ultimate ramifications. The only positive value that persists is access to the kind of world to which money gives access. This is not civilisation, it is the dirty water in which the dishes of civilisation have been washed up. The only possible reaction for one who feels the impact of James like this is an intensely uncomfortable alliance of admiration and hate—an almost awestruck admiration for the consummate technical achievement, and a quite unsilenceable hate for the code in whose service it is employed. GRAHAM HOUGH

THE EARNEST AGE

Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians: an Historic Revaluation of the Victorian Age. *Sylvan Press.* 21s.

The spirit of earnestness broods over Broadcasting House, and most intensely in the Third Programme. It was an earnest project to devise a series of talks on the ideas and beliefs of the Victorians; and the earnest note is sustained in the foreword with which Mr. Harman Grisewood, Head of the Third Programme, introduces the talks now collected into a book. Though Mr. Grisewood uses the word "enjoyment" three times, it is clear that the enjoyment is to be of no vulgar kind. He addresses himself sternly to the frivolous reviewer. "This book," he concludes, "may have an importance . . . for the traditions of our literature. Its right appraisal, therefore, is a delicate matter not lightly to be undertaken." Could the editor of a collection of learned articles write more pompously? The talks collected here are by no means learned: they are sketchy pieces of some two thousand words, mostly inferior to the middle articles in a weekly journal. Far from being important for the traditions of our literature, they are not even (as Mr. Grisewood claims) important "as illustrating a technique"; for the talkers, for the most part, show no sign of being aware of the problems of writing for broadcasting.

It is a curious illusion, strongly held at Broadcasting House, that a work by six (or in this case by fifty) authors is six or fifty times better than a work by a single author. This illusion can be seen on the greatest scale in the various Cambridge Histories (hence maybe the preponderance of Cambridge contributors to the present volume). The Third Programme went one better: not content with fifty authors, it shared the responsibility of editorship among eight authorities—producers, Directors and Heads. The result was to be expected. The talks are individual pieces—some good, some bad, some tolerable—each an introduction to the subject. The sensation is like eating fifty successive varieties of hors d'oeuvres—some edible, mostly stodgy, and none highly flavoured. At the end one is stuffed without being satisfied: wearied of the Victorians without understanding them. For instance, John Stuart Mill and T. H. Huxley occur again and again in these pages as the most representative of thinking Victorians—probably a reasonable judgment. But there is nowhere a systematic discussion of their writings or of the development of their ideas. The only Victorians given individual treatment are Macaulay, Herbert Spencer, Newman (and, as well, two talks on the Tractarians), George Eliot, Ruskin and Benjamin Jowett. Macaulay perhaps got in by grace of having a great-nephew. The others owe their eminence to the same characteristic: they were prigs, earnest about everything and especially about themselves. It would be easy to name Victorians equally representative who failed to pass the test of earnestness. One can imagine the Head and his assistants crossing them off the list. Disraeli? No greasy pole here. Matthew Arnold? Not wholly serious. Oscar Wilde? Not serious at all. Evidently the Victorians had no idea of humour and no belief in fun.

Altogether the Victorian of Broadcasting House was a pretty odd fellow. He was eight times as interested in religion as in economics (there are eight priests among the speakers and one economist). The only economics he knew was that the population was increasing and that England was becoming an industrial country. He cannot have known anything about *laissez-faire*, for he spent much of his time believing that it was inadequate and was coming to an end. Though constantly losing his faith from a excessive study of scientific subjects, he always regretted its loss and indeed, having lost it, became more high-minded than ever. He was extremely intolerant of any irregular sexual behaviour; yet, I regret to say, himself a man of immoral private life, much given to buying the virtue of poor girls. This satisfied his economic principles (such as they were) as well as revealing his psychological conflicts. He did not attach much importance to public-school education (one paragraph in four hundred pages); but much to the Fabians. He had no interest in painting and did not number the Pre-Raphaelites among his contemporaries; he never listened to music; nor did he care for architecture, except for the Crystal Palace. He knew nothing of Europe; did not display any sympathy with national movements in Italy or Hungary; and took only a casual interest in missionaries. In his latter days, he became aggressively imperialistic, but soon grew ashamed of this. He escaped the Marxist rule that ideas and beliefs spring from the circumstances of the time: there were no circumstances of the time except, as aforesaid, the increase of population and the development of industry. The most tiresome thing about him is that he had the same obvious ideas very often—in fact fifty times or so. However, as the speakers in the final free-for-all agreed, though he did not know what to believe, he believed in belief; this is where we should imitate him, if only we could find something to believe in.

All in all, despite some indigestible lumps, this is a very funny book, which a good many Victorians would have enjoyed. But for "an historic revaluation," I shall go back to G. K. Chesterton's book on Victorian literature—or even to Lytton Strachey.

A. J. P. TAYLOR

A TUDOR POET

The Poetry of Sir Thomas Wyatt. A Selection and a Study. By E. M. W. TILLYARD. *Chatto & Windus.* 8s. 6d.

Wyatt is not a forgotten poet, though perhaps an unfamiliar one. In the gamble of literary reputation he has been twice lucky; with the scholar and with the dilettante reader. His importing of that Italian form, the sonnet, into English writing would be enough to establish him for all time, honourably if dully, with the authors of *Gorboduc* and other textbook heroes. But, more than this, two or three of his poems have caught the taste of the anthologists: only Palgrave (who did not include poems he curiously described as "high-kilted") seems to have been able to resist *They flee from me*, which, in its metrical sophistication as much as in its subject, is one of the outstanding poems of the sixteenth century. I quote the first two verses:

They flee from me that sometime did me seek,
With naked foot stalking in my chamber.
I have seen them gentle, tame and meek,
That now are wild and do not remember
That sometime they put themselves in danger
To take bread at my hand; and now they range
Busily seeking with a continual change.

Thankt be fortune, it hath been otherwise
Twenty times better; but once, in special,
In thin array, after a pleasant guise,
When her loose gown from her shoulders did fall,
And she me caught in her arms long and small,
Therewith all sweetly did me kiss,
And softly said: Dear heart, how like you this?

What do we know of the writer of this poem, and of those other favourites, *Forget Not Yet* and *My Lute, Awake*? Of the surface events of his life a good deal, as it happens; more than we know of Shakespeare's. He was born in 1503 and died in 1542, a loyal and capable diplomat. Cambridge, a post in the Royal household, an unhappy marriage at seventeen (not, then, an unusual age; his son married at fifteen), official journeys to France and Italy; official posts in Calais and the English Court—such is the pattern. He was ambassador to Spain in the difficult period following the King's divorce from Katherine of Aragon, and was twice imprisoned in the Tower; the first time, perhaps, through a rumoured association with Anne Boleyn. He died, as it chanced, not by sword or axe, but of a fever caught when hastening to meet a Spanish envoy at Falmouth. He was thirty-nine. But the man himself? Like all the inhabitants of that distant country, sixteenth century

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JONATHAN CAPE

England, he is never wholly to be known. "This Master Wyatt was a very gallant gentleman, and there was no prettier man at Court than he was," writes a Spanish contemporary. It is something, but then it might have been said about half a dozen of the accomplished figures of that brilliant and cruel age. There is more, however. Letters from his patron Cromwell chide him for being over-generous and impetuous, for leaving his own affairs "so rawly" when abroad on some delicate political errand. And we may still read, though not in this edition, two grave letters to his newly-married son, some lively diplomatic despatches, and the speech by which he secured his acquittal in 1541 on a charge of treason.

Still, it is to the poems that we must ultimately turn, and in Dr. Tillyard's inviting book, reprinted after twenty years, we may find nearly sixty of them spaciously arranged, with biographical and critical essays at one end, and notes, discursive rather than pedantic, at the other. Dr. Tillyard, choosing "by intrinsic merit rather than by historical importance," has wisely given few of the sonnets and epigrams and only one of the uncharacteristic *Penitential Psalms* with which Wyatt rounded off his writing days, as if, knowing his span of life to be short, he was anticipating the sober mood of age. The sonnets are mainly early work, compounded too often of cracking, disjointed lines which cannot to-day be scanned or even harmoniously read. That slow and complex form moreover, hardly fits the passionate directness of Wyatt's temperament. The two or three *ottava rima* epigrams included are not graceful, but their subjects are noteworthy. *Tagus, farewell* marks the end of the thankless embassy to Spain; *Lux, my fair falcon* and *Sighs are my food* are both prison poems. Much more interesting are the three autobiographical *Satires* in *terza rima*, written during several months of enforced exile in Kent, and giving a picture of the life of a country gentleman. Narrative and description, especially of this personal kind, are rare in Wyatt, yet Dr. Tillyard includes the extracts grudgingly, objecting to the run-on lines of the verses.

But the most arresting of the poems are the lyrics, which combine a conversational simplicity with a kind of dark seriousness. They are oddly undecorated for that ornamental time: never a shepherdess or nightingale or jewelled catalogue of a mistress's charms. (However, if there are few visual images, there is tunefulness; behind *And wilt thou leave me thus*? and many similar poems the thin, precise, vibrant music of the lute is evident.) The theme is usually the old one of love's unkindness, but even so, Petrarch's rue is differently worn. The mood is sometimes sharp and sad:

> There was never nothing more me pained,
> Nor nothing more me moved,
> As when my sweetheart her complained
> That ever she me loved.
> Alas the while!

sometimes ironically appealing, sometimes urgent and rough, or even full of doom: the terrifying *In aternum* rings like a knell. But it is not languishing. Equality in love—is it so often suggested in the courtly lyric? Wyatt, indeed, does not really belong with the Elizabethans, though his work has the largest share of their first anthology, *Tottel's Miscellany*. Many of his finest poems are born out of the fifteenth-century carol; but at times there is a powerful ring of the age of Donne, nearly a hundred years after Wyatt's death.

> If thou wilt mighty be, flee from the rage
> Of cruel will, and see thou keep thee free
> From the foul yoke of sensual bondage;
> For though thy empire stretch to Indian sea
> And for thy fear trembleth the farthest Thule,
> If thy desire hath over thee the power,
> Subject then art thou and no governour.

Dr. Tillyard's book, with its modernised spelling of the poems, and the leisured air that covers its learning, seems directed at the unacademic reader. But the valuable essays make it more than a mere signpost to the poet. Some prose extracts might therefore have been included, and a few lyrics which have been unaccountably omitted; these things are not easily available. What the selection shows particularly is the dramatic energy of Wyatt's writing, beside which many pleasant poems of the later century appear cloying. Dr. Tillyard suggests a more subtle contrast:

> "As ye came from the holy land of Walsingham," has a certain kind of beauty, an unearthliness, that it would be very difficult to parallel; it is a poem that could very ill be spared; but it is confined; the spirit, if prisoned long in the atmosphere of that poem, would languish. There is absent the lively contact of mind with mind. But in the best poems of Wyatt there is freedom, movement, life.

Compared with the range of his contemporaries, Wyatt's seems narrow, and his absence of imagery intensifies this impression. But in a lyric age, his is an unmistakeable voice. NAOMI LEWIS

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The Ethics of Advertising. By F. P. BISHOP. *Robert Hale.* 10s. 6d.

Let the galled exporter flinch; the advent of a buyers' market, whose imminence to-day can hardly be gainsaid, leaves the withers of one section of the business community unwrung. Whatever Sir Stafford Cripps may say, the practitioners of advertising are confident that their ingenious services will soon be in greater demand to persuade the domestic consumer to absorb goods for which purchasers cannot be found abroad. Mr. Harold Wilson's bonfire of controls, the re-emergence of numerous proprietary wares, the recent increase in allocations of newsprint—all these have added to optimism in the advertising agencies. Gone, they believe, are the austere days when advertisers, seeking to keep sweet the memory of a household word, had to rest content with a succinct announcement of a branded name, with the rider that at present shoppers would look for it in vain. Are there not signs that already the old technique is being invoked? We have once again the appeal to fear—of colds, coughs and constipation; of a hangover which only ——'s lime-juice can defeat; of never hearing "Won't you take my seat?" because, hatless, you do not achieve the sex-appeal that only the milliner bestows. Once more cosmetician and couturier play on the emotions conjured up by Hollywood glamour; copywriters are thinking up fresh approaches to the old instincts of snobbery and acquisitiveness; and, Chancellor or no Chancellor, all seems set, in our still predominantly capitalist society, for subjecting the public to persuasive exhortations to buy. Earn, beg, borrow or steal as you please: buy you must.

Is this process compatible with the planning, or at least semi-planning, to which the present Government is committed? Can we afford to risk the disorder which may be caused in our sedate march towards Socialism if capitalists responsible only to their shareholders are allowed to excite appetites and create demands for labour and materials irrespective of the public interest? If one put those questions to Mr. Bishop, he would probably reply, since he is an advocate of parts, that he declined to argue from assumptions thus begged. In a previous book, *The Economics of Advertising*, he sought to rebut the argument that most advertising of the "persuasive" type is economic waste by recourse finally to the contention that, since it makes people desire more, it therefore makes them work harder and produce more—thereby creating an all-round increase in wealth. To a Marxist the assertion makes nonsense; but let that pass. Mr. Bishop is not troubled by the "contradictions" of a capitalist society, nor does he disguise his dislike of planning by the State. What he is chiefly concerned to do in his present book (which is, in substance, a collection of papers on aspects of advertising) is to defend the advertiser from the charge that he is (*a*) generally untruthful, and (*b*) always, or nearly always, an enemy of society in that he inculcates, and must inculcate for his own profit, the worship of exclusively material standards.

On the first count there is no need to dwell unduly. Mr. Bishop, who puts his case with consistent fairness, admits that "partisanship" is inherent in commercial propaganda. Let it be conceded, in turn, that misrepresentation in current advertising practice is the exception rather than the rule. The crux of the matter is whether the real standards of life, as opposed to the "standard of living," are advanced or lowered in an economy dependent on "stimulated consumptionism." Mr. Bishop takes a sternly moral line on the stimulator's *methods*: he quotes with disapproval an advertiser who spoke of "cajoling" purchasers, and he is insistent that the function of advertising should be to educate appetites, and that its appeal should be to reason, not conditioned emotions. But, as to ends, he seems to have little doubt.

> Man does not live by bread alone, but . . . a substantial minimum of material comfort and security is necessary before he can attend to the consideration of the true ends of life.

From this suave premise the argument proceeds to the conclusion that "we can no longer accept as true any doctrine about the 'ends' of life which is inconsistent with . . . raising material standards as high as possible." Civilisation, in short, is obstructed by the African Negro whose only desires are "to fill his belly and lie in the sun," and by the coal-miner who takes a voluntary day off from the pit. Both, according to the author, suffer from a "poverty of wants"—a diagnosis which overlooks the fact that, in the miner's case, "the sun" may be worth more than a day's pay. But then, if leisure came to be regarded as a thing of value in itself, what would happen, in an unplanned society, to the profit factor? The answer is to be found in a passage quoted by Mr. Bishop from a pamphlet issued in 1943 by the U.S Department of Commerce:

> It will be necessary to stimulate demand for products in the minds of millions of people around the world, if they are to add needed consuming

power to keep the world's wheels whirring in the free enterprise system for which we fight.

For those who decline to accept the conclusion that whirring wheels and the concomitant manifestations of monopoly capitalism masquerading as "free enterprise" are the *summum bonum*, it would be difficult to find a stronger argument for a Socialist State in which alone is there a possibility of planned leisure without hunger. But Mr. Bishop will have none of it. To him, State planning means the end of "the world from which all truly creative activity arises"; and competitive commercial advertising, by stimulating choice, becomes "one of the true bulwarks of our personal liberties." A "free" society must preserve its voice, however cracked. To describe this book as the profession of a liberal's faith would be meiosis: it is the testament of an anarchist.

AYLMER VALLANCE

INNOVATORS

The Creative Experiment. By C. M. BOWRA *Macmillan.* 16*s.*

Mr. Bowra calls this book "a kind of sequel" to an earlier volume, *The Heritage of Symbolism*, in which he exposed, with sympathy and perception, the sources of inspiration, and the verse techniques, of Blok, Valéry, Rilke, George and Yeats. In his new book he is concerned with the next generation of poets: the Greek Cavafy, Guillaume Apollinaire, Mayakovsky and Pasternak, the Spaniards, Lorca and Rafael Alberti, and the T. S. Eliot of *The Waste Land*. The later task is the more difficult of the two, because, with the exception of Mr. Eliot, Lorca, and (in some degree) Apollinaire, the writers considered in the present volume are not well known in England, even among cultured people. Mr. Bowra is a helpful guide, because he takes little knowledge for granted in his reader, writes simply and straightforwardly, and communicates his own enthusiasm for modern poetry. To those who are looking for what is called the "higher" criticism, these qualities may not appeal—and indeed I think that the author might profitably have drawn attention more sharply to the faults of the poets he discusses, most of whom may be assumed capable of standing such scrutiny. But there are many lovers of poetry in general who are disheartened by the difficulty of modern verse and who need a recognised authority to "parse" it for them. This Mr. Bowra very efficiently does. It is not his fault, moreover, if five of his chosen poets write in languages which few of his readers (including myself) command. Conformably with his ostensible aim, he never quotes without at the same time providing an English verse equivalent, which seems devised to convey something of the "music", as well as the sense, of the original.

Nevertheless, the extent to which he succeeds in convincing us of the value of these poets does, I seem to feel, vary considerably. Reliable critics with a knowledge of modern Greek all seem agreed on the outstanding quality of Cavafy's work; but I do not think the quotations in this book go far to support the contention. Again, although his tone is uniformly enthusiastic, Mr. Bowra's strenuous efforts to display Mayakovsky as an important poet, or, indeed, as anything more than a vociferous improviser, failed signally with at least one reader—the more so as he does not claim that Mayakovsky's communicative gift depends primarily on the structure of the Russian language. It seems fairly clear that, if this meretricious poet could claim something of the vigour and sweep of Walt Whitman, he was strikingly deficient in the embracing charity which is the kernel of the American poet's greatness. It is this detailed sympathy with individuals of all kinds which makes durable the work of Lorca and Apollinaire, neither of them "ivory tower" poets. Here Mr. Bowra is on firmer ground, and his chapters on these two writers are extremely convincing. One paragraph in particular is worth quoting for its insight into the stuff of modern poetry in general, and in particular those qualities of Apollinaire's work which make it surprisingly moving to us still, despite the period encrustations.

Apollinaire's poetry was his immediate and instinctive reaction to life. He had an extraordinary gift for making the most of his circumstances and extracting some positive profit from them. Everything that he saw made some impression on him, and he was the last man in the world to be influenced by established notions of what is worth seeing and knowing. So his poetry, which seems disparate and heterogeneous, is the true reflection of his life. When he went to Germany he was inspired not by the romantic German past or the familiar mystery of the German landscape, but by the pathos of a prostitute in Cologne, the animals of the Gipsies on the banks of the Rhine, the quarrel of two old Jews on their way to the synagogue, children playing in the cemetery, and the hoot of owls in the wind over the water. In his many references to France and to Paris he is equally faithful to his own sensations and memories, and records with scrupulous exactness the moments which have meant most to him, the workmen and the typists walking to their labours in the morning, the polyps under the water in the Mediterranean, the noise of bells ringing in a railway station, an old peasant driving his ox slowly through a fog and singing a song of unfaithful love, the gas-jets hissing by moonlight, the beauty of Parisian nights in September on the empty quays, the acrobats performing in the streets on 14th July. Apollinaire's poetry is crowded with observation of things which struck him and remained with him because of some beauty or humanity in them . . .

Beneath the smartness, the cleverness, the experimentalism and the practical jokery lies a simplicity which reminds us that Apollinaire was not French by birth. The immediate and unmixed emotion is always strong enough to carry the elaborations of his manner. Elusive as all Protean individuals, he has proved a most important, though often indirect, influence on succeeding generations of poets, both here and on the Continent. Compared with another contemporary innovator, Ezra Pound, Apollinaire appears the least affected of poets; yet English critics on the whole have tended either to ignore or to patronise him as a demoded amateur. Mr. Bowra's sympathetic essay is a necessary corrective to these errors.

I daresay it will be found that the most generally useful chapter in this book is that devoted to a close analysis of *The Waste Land*. Many writers have attempted to elucidate this eccentric, comfortless, heterogeneous, yet strangely eloquent and original poem, but more often than not they have only increased the confusion by "reading into" it what is not there. Mr. Bowra avoids this mistake. His exposition gathers all the clues together and shows whither they lead. There will no longer be any excuse for finding *The Waste Land* incomprehensible. Its acrid taste will always be sufficient to evoke the feeling of an historical pause.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

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Russian Child and Russian Wife. By TANYA MATTHEWS. *Gollancz.* 15*s.*

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One has only to dip into a number of new autobiographies to realise just how respectable the writing of fiction has become. Novelists once thought fit to disguise themselves (not very heavily it is true) as biographers and historians but times have changed and nowadays, it seems, the biographer and the historian aspire to the dignity of the novelist. How odd that the narrative which results is often less convincing than the unblushing fiction with which it competes! We are bothered by the conversations, for example. How can a man of fifty remember every word spoken at his fifth birthday party? Even more disconcerting are the extraordinary incidents which, without comment or explanation, the writer sets down as though they are part and parcel of everyone's experience. One of these

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new books takes us into the house of a dipsomaniac where, among other enormities, we find a dead baby preserved in a large jar of spirits. Another book describes how two small children walk down a village street, turn aside into an undertaker's shop and there discover one of their playmates lying dead in an open coffin. (Surely not in the undertaker's shop! we think). In a third book a woman is carried on a hammock frame through a swiftly flowing river and the water is so deep that it comes up to the chins of her native bearers. Logs and a dead goat swirl past and we wonder why the bearers do not swirl with them. Such incidents would not bother a self-respecting novel reader for a moment for we can believe in anything if we know it to be untrue; it is only when a writer is claiming to record facts that our confidence is shaken.

When Mrs. Matthews decided to write her autobiography, then, she was faced with a task of more than usual difficulty. She is Russian, was born round about 1914 and she did not leave the Soviet Union until 1944 when she married an English journalist and, after some terrible uncertainties, made good her escape. Most of us, with no special knowledge of the country, have to take books about Russia on trust; and Mrs. Matthews wins ours because her narrative is, in the main, unsensational; it bears out what other reliable books have said on the subject—and the Russians she describes are very much the same people we find in the pages of the 19th-century novelists. There are two points, and two points alone, that cause us to wonder. Although Mrs. Matthews has been out of Russia a comparatively short time her English is vivid and colloquial; and when she writes about the regime her tone is rarely anything but ironical. Her book has, as a result, considerable entertainment value. We are cheered by the Censor's comment on the words of such songs as *Ramona* and *Night and Day*; "Why," he grumbled, "can't they write some ideological words to their music, like 'We are born to make a dream reality,' or 'Boldly, comrades, go ahead. Happiness and liberty we'll attain in the rough battle.'" Mrs. Matthews records her invocation for lifting a heavy cooking-pot: "With the help of Comrade Stalin and all the Politburo, up you go!" Once, suffering from frostbite, she declares that her purple limbs were fussed over "as if they were not ordinary flesh but the original manuscripts of Marx's *Capital*."

But there is no need to worry. Her book is not about politics, she has no axe to grind and on every page there is the unmistakable touch of a very frank, courageous, enormously vital and "genuine" human being. Her main concern is with the concrete and the particular, with food (and the lack of it), with work, her relations with her mother and first husband, with her love affairs and such piquant tasks as teaching the Red Army Choir to sing *The Star-Spangled Banner*. Her English is excellent for the sufficient reason that she studied and taught the language for many years. Some of her freedom from prejudice may be due to her several contacts with foreigners but her own intelligence and her sense of humour undoubtedly deserve the most credit.

Lawrence Hanson, as befits the biographer of Coleridge, tells the story of his early years with many felicitous touches. The novelist's fit is, however, upon him, the young hero is spoken of in the third person as Lance, the tone of the book is that of fiction yet no novel-reader could reasonably complain if he read it through without suspecting that it was no more than the truth; for it is a solid, satisfying piece of work. The time is pre-1914, Lance is the son of a go-ahead quantity surveyor who is also a partner in the prosperous family business of building. Everything is seen through Lance's eyes and yet the great achievement of the book is a very shrewd portrayal of this hard, aggressive but always sympathetic father, of his relations with his very reserved wife and his far from reserved co-partners in the business. This is the book where the dipsomaniac appears, rather incongruously, but some such jolt was inevitably required to precipitate the family crisis which eventually sent Lance off to his boarding school. It is to be hoped we hear more of him.

Mrs. Warner has written an account of her life in Liberia where her husband was employed as a botanist on the Firestone plantation. She is an artist and was first drawn to an interest in the country by the carved ritual masks which she saw when studying sculpture at Columbia University. The book is made attractive by Mrs. Warner's great liking for the natives and for her insight into the techniques of their craftmanship. Unfortunately there is almost as much conversation in her book as in a novel by Miss Compton-Burnett, but conversation of a different quality. "Mohammedan, the new Missy like to learn plenty bush palaver. Tomorrow-time you come for our house, you stay with the Missy. The flower in the bush, the medicine for writing, all the plenty thing you show the new Missy, yah?" This is inevitably tedious over the course of three-hundred pages but a lot of interesting lore is there if one cares to dig for it.

P. H. NEWBY

SELF PORTRAIT OF A TEACHER

The Problem Family. A. S. NEILL. *Herbert Jenkins.* 7s. 6d.

What I find interesting in Mr. Neill's work is the self-portrait of a teacher. The teacher nowadays is our scapegoat; he is the man who bears the sins of the fathers and doesn't (we hope) visit them on the children. Mr. Neill is above all the articulate teacher.

So far as I can make out this is his ninth book written in the holidays to record the spiritual adventures of term. It is as lively as all the others. The first plan was to telescope two earlier books, *The Problem Parent* and *The Problem Child*, but he soon found he had to rewrite. For Neill is now a parent as well as a teacher. His daughter Zoe, aged one, has made him change his mind.

It would be amusing to collect sentences that begin "I used to think."

> I used to think that a free system of divorce would solve the problem. . . .
>
> I used to think in my innocence that Freudianism would lead the way to health.
>
> I once thought that my psychological treatment made them so [i.e., made Summerhill children social beings] until I discovered that those who refused treatment also became good citizens.

The last sentence is worth expanding. Mr. Neill is recording how "for twenty-seven years I have seen nasty, cheeky, hateful children come to the freedom of Summerhill," and gradually turn into social beings, not because of psychological treatment but because of environment. But environment, as Zoe teaches him daily, is wider than he used to think. "I see now that the problem child is made a problem in the cradle," or else the damage was done in pregnancy, or in conception, or before that or before that. We pass from teacher to nurse, to doctor, to mother-in-law. Yet when we come back to school it turns out that what changes character in Summerhill is social approval or disapproval just as it is outside. Help as well as hell is other people.

Thus, in his nine books, Mr. Neill has been writing a teacher's autobiography. It is valuable because he is (I think) a good teacher and is honest with himself. His jumping off ground of theory is normal enough, "early Bertrand Russell" or "pre-war Cambridge," but it has special features. For instance Mr. Neill is a special sort of Platonist. He believes in free-love and would if necessary ban poets. "For my part if the abolition of repressions produced a world with no crime and punishment and also without poetry, I should gladly live without poetry." This is an unfair quotation for he at once asserts the question does not arise because "great art does not spring from repression"; yet it is revealing and can be

matched for instance with his odd judgment that "Spiritualism is a much less dangerous religion than Christianity." So we can add another characteristic to the portrait, Mr. Neill instinctively avoids mythology (the advantage of Spiritualism is it has none). He refuses to admit that the human situation is either tragic or funny as the myth-makers find it. "All our guffaws in music halls" spring from too much "potting" in infancy and the suppression of masturbation. Again, and perhaps these things are not so disconnected as they seem, he clings to one myth, that of the noble savage. Self-consciousness and civilisation are our ruin, and he will fly in the face of facts to assert the absence of sex-crime and homosexuality among Central Africans.

Now what connects these diverse characteristics is *teleophobia*, a technical term I've just invented, the fear of ends. "While a man has an idea of what a good dog should be he dare not assume what a child should be." And in the end what it amounts to is that Mr. Neill's philosophy is as inconclusive and contradictory as the next man's. As a writer he is muddled and repetitive and heart-searching. Does it matter much in the practice of teaching? I still think he must be a genius among teachers. In his winning phrase he is "on the side of the child." Teaching is an effort of practical sympathy. Like the problem child what the problem teacher lacks is love.

It is all so much easier in school! Mr. Neill can play tricks a parent can't, for instance curing a boy thief by rewarding him for stealing. When the father tried this it failed, and Mr. Neill explains:

> Your boy stole because he felt he was unloved at home. Giving a young thief a sixpenny reward for stealing means you are symbolically giving him love, and when I do it, it often works because I personally am not associated in the child's mind with lack of love.

School, as he says, "is an island", but home joins the mainland and symbolical cures won't work. Yet that is no reason why as problem parents we should not share Mr. Neill's delight in his own practice inside certain creative limits—by which I mean the school walls or Summerhill's moat. Certainly we can enjoy a spiritual journey with a mind honest enough to know that the interesting places are where it changes.

MONTAGU SLATER

PRIVATE WORLDS

William Nicholson. By ROBERT NICHOLS. *Penguin Books.* 3s. 6d.

Frances Hodgkins. By MYFANWY EVANS. *Penguin Books.* 3s. 6d.

Nature came apart in the old lady's hands. She let it stay like that. Frances Hodgkins made no concessions to formal cohesion or legibility, and her world is palpably subjective and intimate. Sir William Nicholson seems to paint the surface of things much as it is, to present what is accessible to all in an accessible way. Yet half an hour's perusal of the plates in this new Penguin is enough to show that, if his world means anything at all, it means something almost as private and elusive as Miss Hodgkins' mood. Not that his is an introvert's world. He doesn't break down nature to present it in his own terms. He just takes things as they seem to be and makes them his own, appropriates them. His portraits present to us the characters of a child's personal mythology (surely Miss Jekyll is Pipit?). These are not invented or fantastic beings but real people who are real in *this* way because this is what they stand for to him. In some of the later works—in the *City Dinner*, the *Lord and Lady Strafford* and the portrait of the Passfields (not reproduced here)—the figures become puppets manipulated by him for his delectation. The still-lifes are a schoolboy's finds, to be put away in a drawer or a pocket and every now and again taken out, relished and put back again. All the same, he is quite pleased to take us into his confidence and show us his fetishes. Show them without archness or exhibitionism, neither concealing their importance to him nor showing off about them. He simply takes a naive pleasure in sharing his pleasures, and does so quite without self-consciousness. "Yes," he said to Robert Nichols, "you've got to be more in love with your subject than with yourself. You've got wholly to forget self." He does forget himself, never asserts or exploits himself—as John and Brangwyn do—yet the self intrudes. And that is his charm. There is more in common between Nicholson and Hodgkins than meets the eye.

The introduction to the Nicholson volume is rather unsatisfactory. Helped by quotations from the artist's talk, Nichols succeeds in evoking the personality of his friend. But, in analysing his work, he moves around it without ever hitting the nail on the head—except for a glancing blow with "the secret and smiling industry of an angelic urchin intent on a surreptitious portrait of some less likeable 'grown-up.'" And he grossly overrates Nicholson—he finds *The Stack, Hall's Fields* "worthy to be placed by a Constable of the last period." Above all, the insensitive quality of the language is disappointing. Robert Nichols was a poet, yet here his imagery is undistinguished and his syntax and rhythms inelegant (*e.g.* "... the design and supervision of the execution of a large rag rug.") Miss Evans's essay, on the other hand, could hardly have been better. Her comments are very much to the point, her writing poetic yet not poetical, her descriptions of colour-harmonies almost as delightful as the colours themselves:

> Her pictures of the middle and late thirties ... seemed like glories dropped from the skies or washed up by the seas ... in each folded space a life of colour, not a human life, enacted—here a sienna-and-white viaduct, below it an emerald-spotted sheepfold, pink edges to the dead cliff grass and a dazzling whitened blue along the shaft of a cart.

These new volumes in the series of Penguin Modern Painters are better produced than the early titles. There is now a spine on which the artist's name is printed—most important this, when a series of uniform volumes is shelved—and the colour and design of the cover together with the typography and paper no longer wear the look of a prospectus.

A. D. B. SYLVESTER

Jane Austen, Facts and Problems. By R. W. CHAPMAN. *Oxford.* 10s. 6d.

A book for addicts. Dr. Chapman edited the Oxford edition of the novels and letters, to which the Clark Lectures, printed in this form may be regarded as footnotes. Too much so, for they often include references to the letters, by number, without giving the text; very annoying, if the reader does not possess them. Again space is given to facts too dryly reported to give any impression, such as a list of Miss Austen's numerous relations. This would be clearer as a plain geneological tree. Let the addict persevere, however; it improves as it goes on. Dr. Chapman is nothing if not sensible and just, as well as immensely erudite, in his study of such topics as Jane Austen's preference for privacy, for her character, emergent from the few remaining personal letters and traditions, and much more from the novels. Above all, he gives soberly all the evidence there is for the Teignmouth romance, and surmises shrewdly that that blow caused the long gap in her writing. The review of the characters of the novels is enthusiastic, this side idolatry. Dr. Chapman is one of those who like Jane Austen at her hardest, and while defending her from the charges of cruelty, and (dare one write the words?) of occasional vulgarity of heart, he naturally thinks *Emma* her masterpiece. More than once he speaks of Miss Bates' "great" speeches. This reviewer prefers *Persuasion* and agrees with Sir Walter Scott in finding Miss Bates a bore, as indeed Emma did. Every man to his taste. But every addict will rejoice to find this expert setting their true value on the love-stories; he quotes George Moore's saying that *Sense and Sensibility* contained the only *prose* portrait of female passion in English literature. For this assessment, stated as quietly as Miss Austen herself could wish, the book should be read by the devoted.

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Report by Naomi Lewis

The mad poetry of the gardening catalogue was not rivalled even by our senior competitors. These Colonels of the rose-bed, "blood-red" or "deep salmon," these titled matrons, "old but excellent crimson, very useful for any purpose," "climber . . . vigorous sport," or "soft pink, sweetly scented"—what characters are at once evoked! So rich, so audacious and intimate is this horticultural language that it might be thought almost too fearful a joy to give one's name to a species. Competitors, rather conservatively, I felt, reserved the privilege on the whole for members of Church, State and Screen. In a large entry poetry was represented by Miss Sitwell and Mr. Eliot ("Sensitive plant produced by correct culture. Not at its best in suburban frames . . ." J. R. Till), the visual arts by Mr. Henry Moore, and there was not a novelist but Mr. Huxley apart from W. N. Dalglish's Compton Mackenzie: "A very elegant bearded thistle of a delicate misty blue, adapting itself to both Mediterranean and Hebridean soil. . ." Some rank growths unsuited to the Turnstile garden had, of course, to be weeded out. The problem was then to find groups of three prize specimens. After commending J. Angus McKay, MacGuffin, J. R. Till, D. M. Hawke, A. O. Baxter, I. H. P., Olric, Alexander Scott and Lakon, I award twenty-five shillings each to John Grant, Stanley French and G. J. Blundell, and seventeen each to D. R. Peddy, Allan M. Laing and M. H. Hodgson. A selection of quality blooms, suitably clipped in some instances to avoid libel, is on display below the winning entries.

Sir Waldron Smithers (Bellis Perennis). Intense purple blue and puce; covered with prickles; head of medium size, solid without being coarse. A perpetual bloomer in the hothouse.

G. B. Shaw (Snapdragon). A very hardy annual; globular head with luxuriant white foliage; very vigorous, with unusually large trumpet; invulnerable to rust, canker, chafers, and thrips.

Mae West (Night-scented Stock). Shell pink, brightened by lustrous carmine sheen; gracefully curving stem, beautifully waved standard; emits entrancing fragrance during the evening. Splendid in a large bed. JOHN GRANT

Dean of Canterbury (Love-in-a-Mist). A brilliant red, on show all the year round, always turns to the east, well-known on the Continent; must not be confused with Archbishop of Canterbury, which is a Godetia, and does not go well in the same bed.

Nye Bevan (Antirrhinum or Snapdragon). Pale pink/deep red, varying with viewpoint, very robust, strong grower underground in youth, useful medicinally in maturity, thrives on bricks, mortar, etc., does well in the house, though too vigorous for some tastes.

Bertrand Russell (Lupin). Derived from long-established stock, this has an individuality all its own, a fine head, slender stem, at its best on exceptional heights, and much favoured in academic groves, but recently more widely known; airborne dissemination. STANLEY FRENCH

Dr. Hewlett Johnson (Canterbury Bell). Rose-pink, verging on red. Hardy perennial. Thrives best on an east aspect. *N.B.*—Blue varieties should not be planted in the vicinity of "Hewlett Johnson" as they are apt to turn mauve, and in any case a clash of colours results.

Arthur Bliss (Gladiolus). Magnificent trumpet shaped blooms, brass-yellow, strikingly variegated so as to form a veritable colour symphony. The massed effect of this variety is particularly pleasing.

Bernard Shaw (Helichrysum: Everlasting Flower). Magnificent pink and bronze blossom, changing to pink and white as the season advances, flowering well into the winter, and particularly brilliant when the sun is in the east. Tall, erect habit. G. J. BLUNDELL

Earl Baldwin (Primrose). Does not flourish among stocks, as do other members of the Bewdli family; shows unusual characteristics including pronounced red tendency. Transplanted some years ago to tropics where generally popular. Not universally admired. Recently successfully crossed with bananas.

Field-Marshal Montgomery (Cactus). Khaki but occasionally decorated profusely with multi-coloured blooms. Thrives in the desert but needs plenty of both lime and light to blossom to full advantage. Can do without liquids.

Noel Coward (Orchid). Found in a diversity of changing colours, a frequent variety being pale red, white and blue. Sometimes blue round edges. Distinctly a hothouse plant; a favourite at shows. D. R. PEDDY

Colonel Blimp (Dahlia). Crimson-scarlet, with bulging eye and hardly any foliage; giant bedder; stout grower on native soil if well mulched with xenophobic fertiliser.

Hannen Swaffer (Sweet pea). Pale pink, with deep white under border; grows tall and edgy in rows; may be stimulated by hot water; medium scent; needs support from Styx; assiduous cultivation repays labour.

James Hadley Chase (Iris—poor man's orchid). Blood-red or blondish hardy annual; roots well in decaying matter; cloacal scent; prolific, making this bloomer the cheapest form of culture. ALLAN M. LAING

Dean Hewlett Johnson (Pink). Deep red, an unusual colour for this plant; although a British strain it has proved more popular with Continental growers; thrives on unfavourable soil and in adverse situations; makes brave show in bed of Canterbury bells.

Rita Hayworth (Passion Flower). Red colour (the golden short-cropped variety of the same name has not been persevered with); this beautiful but wayward plant must be kept under strict control, difficulty may be experienced on making it strike deep roots; bloomed freely this season on the Riviera.

Aldous Huxley (Sunflower). Tall and rather haggard in appearance, chrome yellow; plant in hot, open, sandy place or beneath solitary tree; don't be surprised if nothing seems to happen for a long time. M. H. HODGSON

Eva Peron Passiflora (Passion Flower). Half-hardy (Greenhouse) Perennial. Native of Argentina. Self-supporting climber. Showy trumpets of an attractive form, black with heavily frilled edges softly and subtly suffused with pink, against glaucous palmate leaves. Sensitive to chill of Northern latitudes but a superb exhibition variety.

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Sir Stafford (Thrift). Hardy variety noted for its upright growth; found on stony soil but takes kindly to application of Hoffman's top-dressing. The delicately-balanced flower, produced annually in early April, is eagerly awaited as a sign of the times. The whole plant has the quality of repelling butterflies and drones. D. M. HAWKE

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Foreword by the

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